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Israel keeps Palestinians under siege, but feels economic pinch

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israeli soldiers turned back Palestinians trying to cross to work in Israel Wednesday and prepared to step up operations to combat surging Arab-Israeli violence.

Palestinians condemned the closure of the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip as collective punishment and said it would only strengthen those who opposed efforts to restart Middle East peace talks.

Long lines of cars and buses built up at checkpoints around Jerusalem but soldiers turned away vehicles with the blue number plates issued to Palestinians. Many building sites in Israel were idle because Palestinians make up more than half of the 135,000-strong construction workforce. Farms, garages and small workshops were also badly affected.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin ordered the nearly two million Palestinians of the occupied territories to be sealed off from the Jewish state this week amid public uproar over an increase in attacks on Israelis.

He also relaxed army open-fire regulations and ordered more troops to be sent to the occupied



A Palestinian boy watches as an Israeli soldier fires rubber bullets at protesting Palestinians during a raid on the Shawaf refugee camp in Jerusalem (AFP photo)

territories Tuesday after unknown assailants shot dead two policemen. Security sources said they expected an increase in army operations after the forces arrived.

The indefinite closure began Monday in Gaza and Wednesday in the West Bank. It does not affect Arab East Jerusalem. The closure means economic hardship for the occupied territories, particularly Gaza, because about 100,000 Palestinians work in Israel, usually as day laborers. It also effectively cuts the

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House holds last session of its term; extraordinary session seen unlikely

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Lower House of Parliament Wednesday held the last meeting in its fourth and closing ordinary session amidst strong indications that it will not reconvene for an extraordinary assembly.

Sixty-eight deputies attended the last meeting of the 80-member 11th parliament, which failed to secure the 41 votes necessary to constitutionally oblige the government to call an extraordinary meeting.

The 23-strong Muslim Brotherhood bloc was the only organized group in the House to request the convening of the extraordinary sessions but it did not succeed in mustering the support of enough parliamentarians for its quest.

Deputies opposed to the convening of the session want to start preparing for their reelection campaigns before Parliament's term ends on Nov. 18 while the Brotherhood said it wanted to complete unfinished business that was on the agenda of the house.

Observers said that while the Brotherhood was almost assured of the support of its constituency, other deputies needed to work hard on their reelection bids.

Furthermore, it is said that the Brotherhood deputies could well use the parliamentary platform better than the others for electioneering purposes.

The Constitution stipulates that elections be held within four months before the end of Parliament's term. The mandate of the current House will be automatically extended if elections are not held before then.

Parliament can still require an

extraordinary session if 41 deputies make the request at any time (unless Parliament is dissolved by the King), but observers say this is an unlikely possibility.

The decision of the House not to ask for the extraordinary session left the say on the matter in the hands of the government which observers said has little incentives to call deputies back.

Officials contacted by the Jordan Times ruled out the possibility that the government will call for the session in the near future.

But while the final meeting of the House included the ceremonial thanks and words of praise by both the speaker and the government, it also addressed controversial issues discussed in the secret session the House held Tuesday.

Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben

Shaker said that the government would launch an official investigation to identify and hold accountable those responsible for leaking information about the secret meeting.

"I will probe the issue to find out how the news was leaked and who leaked it," Sharif Zeid told the last session of the House, urging Parliament to hold its own investigation.

Jordanian dailies Tuesday and Wednesday published accounts of the secret session based on sources which were not identified.

Some deputies challenged the credibility of information that Al-Dustour and Sawt Al-Sha'ab Arabic dailies published about the session, contending their reports were aimed at solving discord Tuesday.

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Questions remain and prospects unclear

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

DEPUTIES in Jordan's 11th Parliament held their last scheduled session yesterday, uncertain whether they will meet again before their four-year term ends in November, or that changed circumstances will dictate new elections and new chances in playing the unique in-the-region democratic experiment.

Being probably the only freely elected people's representatives in Jordan's modern history, the deputies themselves represented change in the political life of this country and that alone calls for a period of assessment for the whole experiment.

The time needed for a democratic country to decide whether a new parliament would be a good thing might be just a pause, but in a small

albeit crucial Arab state living in the volatile Middle East the choices are never easy and they certainly are not all made at home.

Jordanians generally feel that it has been possible and workable for successive governments since 1989 to coexist with a sometimes rowdy and troublesome parliament. This is one basic tenet of democracy. But whether a new Lower House can have more opponents than already exists to Jordan's fundamental goals and policies is the question that has to be answered.

Nobody knows for sure what His Majesty King Hussein will eventually decide to do to ensure that, in a totally democratic framework, the majority of deputies in a new house will not oppose the Kingdom's twin basic policies of peace and security. He will perhaps have only a small problem if he uses his constitutional powers to ex-

tend this Parliament's term by another two years. On the other hand, he can call elections for either the summer or fall, depending on the results of studies being made on the Elections Law, which has a determining effect on the outcome of any new elections.

NEWS ANALYSIS

Jordan, namely the regime, is finally winning credit in the West for its ability to contain the Islamists (Jordan does not call them Muslim fundamentalists) by its "policy of inclusion"; there are about 30 Islamists in the 80-member House of Deputies. But the "policy of inclusion" has also been controversial, both at home and to the region. While people here have called it names ranging from "appeasement" to "sellout" to the Islamist and the ultra-

conservatives' agenda, other countries in the region have branded democracy here as a temporary game played by the King for his own reasons and even a threat to their own security.

The King thus finds himself again having to play a balancing act. Right now, he has the peace process to keep alive and Jordan has to stay in it; the economy has to stick by the IMF-World Bank programme; the security of the country cannot be compromised by links with Iran or Hizbollah or any other state; and, needless to say, democratisation has to continue and hopefully even become a model for the region.

It will be difficult for the King to attain these objectives if the Islamists say, or a coalition of the forces that oppose the peace process (the Islamists, the ultra-nationalists and

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EC restates commitment to peace process, but will stay clear of bilateral negotiations

Envoys urge Arabs, Israel not to lose 'the window of opportunity'

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The European Community (EC) Wednesday reaffirmed its commitment to playing a key role in the Middle East peace process, but gave a wide berth to the American-led bilateral phase of Arab-Israeli negotiations by limiting community involvement to the multilateral phase.

A visiting EC delegation also voiced understanding of the economic problems faced by Jordan and reiterated the community's continued support for the Kingdom, particularly for its economic structural programme (See sidebar).

The delegation, headed by Danish Foreign Minister Neils Helveg Petersen, held talks with His Majesty King Hussein, Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Beo Shaker and Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber as well as a Palestinian team before heading for Damascus.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported that during the meeting, which included a working luncheon, the King reaffirmed Jordan's commitment to the peace process and its good faith in seeking a peace settlement based on U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and an "evenhanded implementation of international legitimacy."

Petra quoted the King as saying that Israeli measures against the Palestinians, including expulsion of people from the occupied territories, were posing obstacles in the peace process and emphasising the need for removing the burdens.

The King referred to the problem of Palestinian expellees and noted that the U.N. resolution calling for their immediate repatriation has not been implemented," Petra said.

The King also reaffirmed Jordan's continued role in international peacekeeping operations.

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Europe understands Jordan's problems, will continue aid

THE EUROPEAN Community (EC) understands the economic problems faced by Jordan and will continue to extend assistance to the Kingdom, particularly its economic restructuring programme. EC Commissioner for External Relations Hans van den Broek said Wednesday.

"We are really showing an understanding of the tremendous economic difficulties that Jordan finds itself in these days... under different circumstances... the aftermath of the Gulf war, economic conditions, returns..." Mr. Van der Broek told a press conference.

"We pledge today that we are committed to continuing (European) Community support, for instance towards the structural adjustment programme the government is carrying out with great determination," he said.

The EC commissioner said the community's preoccupation with developments in Eastern European and in the former Soviet Union would not dissuade it from fulfilling its commitment to the Middle East.

"... Our worries and concerns regarding the situations in the Balkans and the former Soviet Union, which has absorbed a lot of our time energy, do not go at the expense of our continued involvement in the Middle East peace process," he said.

"I think that the EC is doing its best and utmost to reiterate its constant commitment, notably through the multilateral negotiations," said Mr. Van den Broek, former foreign minister of the Netherlands.

Somali factions draw up disarmament programme

MOGADISHU (R) — Somalia's 15 warring factions have begun drawing up practical steps to disarm the Somali population, a United Nations spokesman said Wednesday.

The ceasefire and disarmament committee, in which all the factions are represented, held a second day of talks Wednesday to discuss disarmament and ceasefire violations.

U.N. spokesman Farouk Mawlawi told reporters the committee had identified 55 "transition sites" across the Horn of Africa country, where militias could hand in their weapons.

"We are studying the feasibility of these sites... where militias will bring in light weapons and be taken care of by the humanitarian organisations," Mr. Mawlawi said.

The transition sites will also be used for the rehabilitation of militias, Mr. Mawlawi said.

The committee has set a 90-day deadline to disarm the Somali population.

The anarchic country was awash with guns before a 23-nation force arrived last December to restore order and stop the looting of food convoys.

The U.S.-led military says it has been fairly successful in confiscating heavy weapons used during the two-year war and these are being held in 12 cantonment areas. However, many light weapons are still in circulation.

The U.N. takes over control of

Somalia from U.S.-led forces in May and a key aim will be to disarm the population and reintegrate militia into society. The creation of a police force, judiciary and prison system are a priority.

The disarmament and ceasefire committee's meeting in Mogadishu this week follows a landmark agreement reached in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa at the weekend to establish the first government in Somalia in two years.

Mr. Mawlawi, who attended the talks, said the factions appeared to be taking the agreement very seriously and were keen on its immediate implementation.

"We are extremely elated at the result of this conference and I think they have been more forthcoming than ever before," Mr. Mawlawi said.

He said a peace committee representing the factions planned to travel across Somalia to explain the agreement.

A confident of Mogadishu warlord Mohammed Farah Aidede said meanwhile that efforts to set up a federal government would be threatened if faction leader Mohammed Said Hersi took part in it.

Abdulkarim Ahamad Ali, secretary-general of Geo. Aidede's United Somali Congress (USC), strongly opposed the

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Balladur announces cuts in budget, German visit

PARIS (R) — Edouard Balladur, France's new conservative prime minister, moved boldly into the driving seat Wednesday, ordering government spending cuts and announcing he would go to Germany soon.

The moves reflected Mr. Balladur's desire to curb the growing budget deficit bequeathed by the outgoing Socialist government and underlined his commitment to the Franco-German partnership at the centre of the European Community (EC).

The decisions were announced after the government's first meeting, billed as an informal get-together, since it was appointed by President Francois Mitterrand Tuesday.

"The prime minister wished to impress on ministers the need to economise in these difficult times," government spokesman Nicolas Sarkozy told reporters.

Mr. Mitterrand was not present at the meeting, suggesting Mr. Balladur intended to exercise a degree of independence in domestic and foreign policy. The first cabinet meeting chaired by Mr. Mitterrand is due Friday.

Mr. Sarkozy, who is also budget minister, said Mr. Balladur had asked him to prepare a revised budget bill quickly to reduce state spending by at least 20 billion francs (\$3.6 billion) in line with election pledges.

During the campaign leading up to last week's landslide victory at the polls, the centre-right said

it would pass on initial savings to the building industry, small business and other sectors to help create jobs.

Opinion polls show onemployment, which crossed the politically sensitive threshold of three million on Mr. Balladur's first day in office Tuesday, is the voters' main concern.

Mr. Sarkozy announced that Mr. Balladur would meet Chancellor Helmut Kohl in Germany soon, possibly next week. But government sources in Berlin said the meeting was more likely to take place around April 19.

The purpose of the trip would be to reassure Mr. Kohl that Mr. Balladur's government was committed to the EC and its system of tightly linked exchange rates.

Some mavericks in Mr. Balladur's Gaullist Rally for the Republic Party have criticised the policy of keeping the franc steady against the mark, saying devaluation would have allowed France to cut high interest rates that are punishing business.

The line-up of Mr. Balladur's cabinet has convinced financial markets that the government had a pro-European slant and would support a strong franc.

Mr. Sarkozy said Mr. Balladur would consult Mr. Mitterrand on the trip in deference to the president's foreign policy responsibilities enshrined in the constitution.

In a highly symbolic gesture,

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Egypt tells Muslim groups to condemn militants

CAIRO (Agency) — Egypt demanded Wednesday that Muslim fundamentalist groups condemn attacks by militants and warned that its silence was no longer acceptable.

"We announce this clearly, who is not with us is against us," Interior Minister Abdul Halim Musa said in a parliamentary address published in newspapers.

Tensions were running high a day after an explosion at one of Cairo's world famous pyramids and a Muslim militant warning to foreign tourists and businessmen to get out of Egypt fast.

Tuesday's explosion inside pyramid was caused by an electrical short circuit, officials said.

Upper Egypt, police arrested two militant suspects in bomb attacks, shot and wounded a suspect who tried to escape arrest, and seized more explosives, security sources said.

In his parliamentary speech, Mr. Musa told the Muslim Brotherhood, Egypt's oldest fundamentalist group, and other Islamic societies they should come off the fence and take a stand on militant violence.

"All these groups are requested to define their positions categorically... do they support violence or oppose it? The situation does not tolerate half-solutions," he said.

But the Muslim Brotherhood said its position was clearly defined.

"The ministry needs not to make warnings... we do not accept or support violence, and at the same time, we do not accept the violence carried out by the government," Mamoun Hudaibi, the Brotherhood's spokesman, said.

Police in the last month have launched a series of raids on militants fighting to overthrow the government, killing 29. At least 116 people have been killed.

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Yeltsin to challenge congress moves

MOSCOW (AP) — President Boris Yeltsin will challenge several decisions by hardline lawmakers in the constitutional court, but is leaning against holding a rival referendum, his chief of staff said Wednesday.

Mr. Yeltsin has already asked the court to overturn controversial voting procedures for an April 25 referendum that was approved Monday by the Congress of People's Deputies, Sergei Filatov told reporters.

The announcement follows two days of scrambling by Mr. Yeltsin's supporters to work out a political strategy after narrowly surviving attempts in congress to force him from office.

"We will appeal to the constitutional court to protest numerous violations of the constitution," Mr. Filatov said Wednesday. He said he could not elaborate because the congress has not yet published all its decisions.

A four-day emergency session of congress failed to decide the power struggle between president and parliament, but it further

eroded Mr. Yeltsin's powers. His foes fell 72 votes short of the 689 needed to remove him from office in a vote Sunday.

Bitter attacks on Mr. Yeltsin have become a habit with the 1,033-member congress, dominated by former Communist Party officials, factory directors and state farm chiefs elected before the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Many of them oppose Mr. Yeltsin's free-market reforms and Western-oriented foreign policy.

Mr. Yeltsin proposed the referendum to resolve the power struggle. Congress approved it, but added the loaded question on whether Russians support his painful economic reforms begun 15 months ago. Many Russians support Mr. Yeltsin personally, but are angry about their declining living standards.

Voters will also be asked if they want early elections for president and parliament and if they have confidence in Yeltsin.

Mr. Filatov said Mr. Yeltsin has already filed an appeal challenging a congress decision that

50 per cent of all eligible voters — not just those voting — must approve each of four referendum questions.

That would make it hard for Mr. Yeltsin to win the vote of confidence. When elected president in 1991, he got more than 60 per cent of the vote, but only about a third of the 105 million eligible voters.

The congress made a wrong decision on how to count votes on the question of confidence in the president," Mr. Filatov said.

"The president was elected by a simple majority of those who cast ballots... I hope the constitutional court will help solve this problem."

Mr. Yeltsin held a strategy session Tuesday with about 100 legislative allies who urged him to ask the constitutional court to strike down the question about his economic policies.

They also advised Mr. Yeltsin against holding a competing referendum and warned that discontent was growing in the military.

Oil embargo unlikely on Libya; Tehran hits back at U.S. campaign

CAIRO (Agencies) — U.S. consultations about imposing oil sanctions on Libya signal no softening under the Clinton administration but diplomats see little chance the United Nations will broaden sanctions in next week's review.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher threatened Libya on Tuesday with a Global oil embargo.

Testifying in the U.S. Senate, he heaped pressure on Libya for its refusal to hand over for trial two officials accused of carrying out the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am jet over Lockerbie, Scotland, in which 270 people died.

Mr. Christopher's stern words, included strong attacks on Iraq and Iran, were meant to send a clear signal that the Clinton administration was no weakening on terrorism, Western and Arab diplomats in Cairo said.

But any serious U.S. move to persuade the Security Council to impose an oil embargo would

aggravate feelings among developing nations that the U.N. is a Western club with double standards, and play havoc with a relatively stable oil market.

"Sure the Americans will publicly blast terrorism but the last thing they want is more destabilisation in the Middle East," a diplomat said. "Libya is a passive not an active problem."

Current sanctions, imposed last April 15 and due to be reviewed by the Security Council next week, include a ban on arms sales and international flights and minimal diplomatic contacts.

An oil embargo could cause the country to collapse into anarchy within days, diplomats said. Unlike Iraq, Libya has virtually no resources other than the 1.5 million barrels of high-quality crude it pumps daily.

A group of Arab foreign ministers met in Tunis to discuss the crisis about two weeks ago and Arab League Secretary-General Esmat Abdul Maguid is due to fly

to New York next week to put Libya's case against more sanctions.

Iran's Foreign Ministry said Wednesday that U.S. allegations of terrorism against Tehran were unfounded.

Tehran radio, meanwhile, said Iran would not buckle under to American pressure to change its policies.

Mr. Christopher told Congress Tuesday that Iran was an "international outlaw." He said: "Iran one of the principal sources of support for terrorist groups around the world."

Mr. Christopher indirectly criticised France, Germany and other U.S. allies he said had supported World Bank loans to Tehran.

The Islamic Republic News Agency quoted (IRNA) Foreign Ministry spokesman as saying the allegations were "unfounded, worthless and an indication of confusion in Washington foreign policy."

Cyprus talks at U.N. set for May 24

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Cypriot President Glafcos Clerides and Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denkash will begin a new round of talks at the United Nations on May 24 on reunifying their divided island, the United Nations said Tuesday.

The date was agreed at a joint meeting by the two leaders with Secretary-General Boutros Ghali. They followed separate meetings between them and the U.N. chief.

"The joint negotiations will be preceded by a preparatory process in which the representatives of the secretary-general will meet in Nicosia with the leaders of the two communities," a U.N. statement said.

It said Mr. Clerides, who heads the Greek Cypriot community, and Mr. Denkash had "expressed their willingness to resume the joint negotiations Monday, May 24, 1993, at United Nations headquarters using the set of ideas for the purpose of reaching freely a mutually acceptable overall framework agreement."

The set of ideas, and an accompanying map, were presented by Dr. Ghali last summer to Mr. Denkash and Mr. Clerides' predecessor as president, George Vassiliou, as a basis for the establishment of a bi-communal, bi-zonal federation.

Cyprus has been virtually partitioned since Turkish troops occupied the northern part of the island in 1974 following a brief coup in Nicosia backed by the military junta then ruling Greece.

The Turkish Cypriots proclaimed their own state in 1983 with Mr. Denkash as president but it is recognised only by Ankara.

During the last round of negotiations, spread over several months last year and ending last November, Mr. Denkash raised objections to key parts of the set of ideas and the map.

Mr. Clerides also expressed some reservations, but for different reasons, during a political campaign earlier this year which resulted in his election last month as president.

The U.N. announcement said the purpose of the preparatory work in Nicosia would be "to clarify the specific concerns of the two leaders relating to the draft overall framework agreement contained in the set of ideas and to address those concerns with a view to facilitating progress at the resumed joint negotiations in New York."

"They will also discuss the implementation of confidence-building measures with a view to



Glafcos Clerides

creating a new climate of confidence which will contribute to the success of the negotiating process."

Mr. Clerides and Mr. Denkash, both London-trained barristers, have known each other for decades and were diplomatic sparring partners on the Cyprus issue more than 20 years ago.

The U.N. statement said Dr. Ghali welcomed the declared intention of the two leaders to meet privately from time to time and to hold meetings with the head of the political parties from both sides, in parallel with the negotiations his auspices.

"He believes that such encounters can help overcome long-standing mutual distrust and can contribute to the success of both the preparatory process and the joint negotiations," the statement added.

In addition to confirming the May 24 date, Mr. Clerides told reporters the secretary-general would appoint Gustave Feissel, a senior official at U.N. headquarters involved in the Cyprus question, as his assistant special representative in Nicosia.

Dr. Ghali would also appoint "an important personality" to become his special representative on the island — a post recently vacated by Argentine diplomat Oscar Camillino, who has returned to Buenos Aires to become defence minister.

Mr. Denkash confirmed he was to be Mr. Clerides' dinner guest Tuesday night and said he hoped this represented "a change of heart for the good, because if we cannot talk how can we establish a partnership?"

He said that since the time of Spyros Kyprianou, who was president during the late 1970s and early 1980s, "talking to us... was anathema for the Greek Cypriot leaders."

Mr. Clerides and Mr. Denkash are also due to attend a working lunch with Dr. Ghali Wednesday.

Kuwaiti reporter held for hitting MP

KUWAIT (R) — A journalist allegedly beat up a member of parliament in the National Assembly Tuesday in an incident unprecedented in Kuwait's 30-year parliamentary tradition.

Assembly Speaker and opposition veteran Ahmad Al Saadoun said the incident had a political dimension that involved "enemies of democracy" and was not purely a personal quarrel.

Security guards acting on Mr. Saadoun's orders arrested Al Rai Al'am newspaper reporter Hamed Boyabes after he knocked parliamentarian Mufarrej Nahar Al Mutairi to the floor of the chamber and repeatedly struck him.

Parliamentarians described the assault as unprecedented both because of the level of violence used and because it was between an MP and a journalist.

They said altercations in the past were between MPs only and rarely went beyond the level of shouting.

They said the two men had quarrelled over an article by Mr. Boyabes on March 10 that was highly critical of Mr. Mutairi. Mr. Boyabes took what some political observers saw as the provocative step of including a reference in his article to Mr. Mutairi's wife.

"One of the (people) who claim to belong to the Kuwaiti press assaulted one of our honourable members Mufarrej Nahar Al Mutairi, assaults whose marks are still present on his body," Mr. Saadoun told the assembly.

"I ordered the head of the guards to arrest Hamed Boyabes and to handcuff him and send him guarded to the attorney general."

Mr. Saadoun suggested the incident was one of a series of attempts "to drag the assembly into specific issues."

"These individuals are but masks and we have to know who is behind them," he said.

The opposition-dominated assembly has revived a lively parliamentary tradition unmatched anywhere else in the Gulf since it began sitting again in October after a six-year break.

The 60-seat assembly has begun investigating all government actions including legislation issued by decree since it was dissolved by the government in 1986.

Among the most sensitive probes are inquiries into suspected misuse of public funds including mismanagement of the emirate's overseas investment empire and government handling of the crisis with Iraq that preceded Iraq's August 1990 invasion.



ISRAELI RAID: A Palestinian woman passes by refugee camp in Jerusalem. At least 20 Palestinians were arrested (AFP photo)

Exports of cellular networks to Middle East cause concern

By Charles Hughes

ANOTHER ROW appears to be brewing over exports to the Middle East, only this time the problem is "cellular" mobile radio systems. Although such systems may be the cause of some embarrassment to members of the British royal family, they are hardly lethal weapons. Most of the Gulf states already operate such networks and they have been a valuable source of export revenue for the West. Nevertheless, the latest systems have rung alarm bells in Western intelligence communities.

It is surprising it has taken them so long to wake up to the problem since it all started in the early 1980s. Until recently most European countries had incompatible cellular networks and visitors to another country could not make or receive calls unless they fitted a new mobile set. Then in 1983 the European Council for Posts and Telecommunications (CEPT), which extends beyond the European Community, resolved to define a cellular system, known as "GSM," to "cover" the whole of Europe. They decided to adopt a "digital" system for purely technical reasons but one of the incidental advantages was that, unlike the current "analogue" systems, it was comparatively easy to encrypt the signals. Apart from protecting the privacy

of the conversations, it would help to prevent unauthorised users impersonating the "call sign" of a legitimate subscriber and so making calls that would be charged to the unsuspecting victim.

The use of an encrypted system appears to be in accordance with Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which protects privacy of communications but allows for the legal interception by a proper authority in the interest of national security or crime prevention. Since the operating organisation would always have the "keys" to the encrypted communications, authorised interception would be possible with the proper safeguards. The problem arises when the system is exported elsewhere, particularly the Arab world. If the U.S. and the Israelis wish to intercept the communications, they face a major problem.

An early decision in the design of the GSM system was to adopt an encryption technique that incorporated a very high degree of "protection" against "unauthorised interception." The method chosen was based on the U.S. Data Encryption Standard (DES).

Although it appears possible to use very high power computers to intercept messages encrypted to the DES level, in order to pick out the few messages that might

be of interest it would be necessary to decrypt the millions of domestic and business conversations in the Arab radiophone networks. Military networks might form a subset of the civil networks and their communications would be doubly protected by being "lost in the crowd." It would not even be feasible to restrict the interceptions to calls to particular telephone numbers, since even that information would be encrypted. Interception would be a mammoth task that might prove too much for even the resources of the CIA.

At the Bahrain conference on Arab telecommunications at the end of January, the GSM system was being offered as a working technology that was in operation in several European countries. That brought matters to a head. Pressure is now being exerted by the Americans on European companies, including those in Sweden and Finland, not to export the GSM system to Arab countries and the DTI is faithfully clamping down on British companies.

In the meantime, the Americans are trying to sell their own D-AMPS system, which has much weaker encryption. Some Europeans are suggesting that the U.S. pressure has less to do with security than to secure advantage for American exporters — Middle East International.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Iran needs years of submarine training

ABU DHABI (AP) — It will take at least three years of training before Iran can run successful missions with submarines it is acquiring from Russia, a British officer said Wednesday. Iran is the only country in the Gulf to have acquired submarines, a development that has alarmed its neighbours as well as Western countries who view Tehran with suspicion. "It takes a long time to build up expertise to become a submariner," Captain Martin MacPherson told reporters aboard HMS Triumph, currently on a port call to Abu Dhabi. "You need about three years of training to carry out a mission with success, but to wage a long-term submarine war you need at least 15 years," Capt. MacPherson said. The Triumph, the first British nuclear submarine to enter the Gulf, docked at Abu Dhabi Monday. Capt. MacPherson is representing flag officer of submarines in the royal navy.

11 Kurds die in clash during ceasefire

ANKARA (R) — Turkish troops killed 11 Kurdish rebels in two incidents in southeastern Turkey, the highest death toll since Kurdish guerrillas declared a 26-day ceasefire, officials said Wednesday. They said troops killed the guerrillas of the separatist Kurdistan Labour Party (PKK) in gunbattles Tuesday in Mardin and Tunceli provinces. There were no reports of casualties among the troops. A ceasefire declared unilaterally by PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan on March 17 has led to a marked decrease in clashes in the southeast where the PKK has waged an independence war since 1987. But Turkish troops are keeping up operations against the rebels in the mountains, security sources say.

Turkey to ban private radio broadcasting

ISTANBUL (R) — Turkey has ordered 500 private radio stations to cease broadcasting. Turkish private broadcasters said Wednesday. The directors of the Association of Turkish Broadcasters told reporters the ban would go into effect within 24 hours. The Directorate of Wireless Communications, part of the Ministry of Transport and Communications, Tuesday ordered the governors of Turkey's 76 provinces to close down the radio stations. It said the stations were illegal and operating without licenses, and ordered provincial authorities to confiscate all radio equipment and transmitters if they did not cease broadcasting. A government promise last year to liberalise the airwaves, monopolised by Turkey's state radio and television, prompted 500 radio stations, many based in Istanbul, to begin broadcasting. Several of the stations beam programmes from European cities by satellite and retransmit in Turkey.

U.S. protests Malta's release of hijacker

WASHINGTON (R) — The U.S. House of Representatives voted unanimously Tuesday to condemn Malta's release from prison of a Palestinian convicted in the 1985 hijacking of an Egyptian airliner in which 60 people died, including an American woman. House members called the release last month of Mohammad Ali Rezaek an outrage, a mistake and a lapse in international efforts to combat terrorism. The House approved by a 421-0 vote a resolution calling for a review of U.S. relations with Malta and urging all governments to help bring Rezaek to the United States or another country to face additional hijacking and murder charges. A warrant for his arrest had been issued by a federal court in Washington.

Egyptian woman freed from Canadian detention

MONTREAL (AP) — An Egyptian woman ordered deported and held last week despite her fear of religious persecution has been released from detention. Karima Boutros and her two oldest children, Jihan, 21, and Sherif, 22, were detained immediately after their refugee hearing last Friday, when an arbitrator decided they did not have a refugee claim. The three were freed after a friend posted bond. Ms. Boutros's three younger children, aged 7, 11 and 13 were left at home alone Friday after she was detained. Jihan Boutros said the family tried to arrange for a friend to look after the children but were not allowed to make phone calls in detention. A family acquaintance found the three boys at home late Friday. Karima Boutros said she must stay in Canada because returning to Egypt would mean imprisonment or death. She converted her children to Coptic Christianity after separating from her Muslim husband about six years ago.

French poll results good news for Iran — paper

NICOSIA (R) — An Iranian newspaper hailed on Wednesday the victory of the centre-right in French elections as "good news," for Tehran. The English-language Tehran Times, reputed to be close to the Iranian Foreign Ministry, said ties with Paris seem to improve when the right are in power in France. "It would seem that Tehran-Paris ties improve perceptibly whenever the faction to which (Gaulist leader Jacques) Chirac belongs comes into power in France," said the editorial which was carried by the Iranian news agency IRNA. It said the outgoing Socialist government was "too much under the influence of the expatriate Iranians opposing the Islamic Republic government." But centre-right Union for France (UPF) alliance routed the ruling Socialists in Sunday's elections, giving them 484 of the National Assembly's 577 seats.

Tremor rocks northwest Iran

NICOSIA (R) — An earthquake measuring five degrees on the open-ended Richter scale rocked northwestern Iran Wednesday, the second in the area in as many weeks. The Iranian news agency IRNA said the quake was "relatively strong" and jolted the cities of Khoy, Salmas and Qazvin in the province of West Azarbaijan, 650 kilometres north west of Tehran. The agency did not say if there was any material damage or casualties. Three earthquakes jolted southern and northeastern Iran on Tuesday but no casualties were reported, IRNA said earlier.

Khamenei pardons 1,682 prisoners

NICOSIA (R) — Iran's spiritual leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei pardoned and commuted the sentences of 1,682 prisoners to mark the Islamic Republic Day on April 1. The Iranian news agency IRNA said the amnesty was granted on the advice of the head of the judiciary, Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi.

Questions raised about Iran's role in inspiring New York bombers

By Donna Abu Nasr
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Did Iran play an indirect role in the World Trade Centre bombing?

Although the actual bombing appears to be the work of amateurs, some experts see Iran's radical anti-Western regime as the source of inspiration for the group which concocted the bomb that killed six people, wounded more than 1,000 and caused \$1 billion in damages on Feb. 26.

Vincent Cannistraro, former chief of Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) counterterrorism operations, told the Associated Press that the Iranians were financing Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman, a fundamentalist Egyptian cleric who was spiritual guru for at least some of those charged in the bombing.

Similar reports of Iranian financing have circulated in Egypt. Sheikh Omar has denied getting money from Iran; Tehran has issued no official comment.

Some experts note the methodology of the attack is consistent with attacks by Iranian-backed groups in the Middle East — especially the use of a van or truck to deliver the explosive.

Others suggest the Iranian influence is more one of igniting the passion of the attackers rather than the bombs themselves.

"They do it by inspiration knowing full well where that would lead," said Daniel Pipes, director of the Middle East Council at the Foreign Policy Research Institute in Philadelphia.

Richard Clutterbuck, a retired British major general and lecturer at Essex University, said such groups often have no formal structure.

"I don't think one neces-

sarily needs to look for a structure like a military structure. It is plausible for small groups to act on fundamentalist beliefs they hold, get an idea from somebody... and act on it without any chain of communication coming from a centre," said Mr. Clutterbuck, who has written 12 books on terrorism.

Iran has expanded its influence in part because of a relatively newfound ability to strike a common political cause with Sunni Muslims, a sect that predominates in the Arab World and has been at odds with the Shiites for more than 1,000 years over issues of religious law and practices.

Sheikh Omar has become a symbol of that change.

Asad Aho Khalil, a Lebanese scholar at the Middle East Institute here, says the Egyptian cleric in his underground cassettes has stressed the need for cooperation between Sunnis and Shiites. He also has spoken in

support of Iran's revolution.

Mr. Abu Khalil suggests a new political agenda is uniting angry Arab youths and transcending traditional sectarian differences.

"The underlying causes of Islamic fundamentalism are not religious in nature. It has nothing to do with religious fervor. It has to do with deep dissatisfaction, despair, disillusionment and frustration among the youth," Mr. Abu Khalil said. "They recruit from these frustrated youth."

America's role in the Gulf war, U.S. support for Israel and American backing for repressive Arab regimes were all sources of radical anger as were poor economic conditions in countries like Egypt, he said.

Experts like Mr. Cannistraro see the possibility of a more direct Iranian involvement. He said Iranian Revolutionary Guards were training activists of Sheikh Omar's Islamic Group at a camp in Sudan.

Egyptian officials have linked Iran to the Islamic Group, which has carried out a series of attacks against foreign tourists, economic targets and police in an effort to undermine President Hosni Mubarak's secular government.

Mr. Cannistraro said that if Iran wanted to wage a campaign of terror in the United States it could turn to the military Hizbollah, or Party of God, which it has set up to carry out its revolutionary goals.

He said it has cells in the United States, Canada, West Africa and the Middle East. He said the number of Hizbollah activists in the United States was in the "low, low hundreds" but that would be sufficient to cause trouble.

"If the Iranians decide that they're going to launch a complete full-scale terrorist campaign against the United States... they have at least the potential to call on these people to carry out their activities," he added.

"That's the real danger. And you don't need to have professionals to do that."

While Iran has not directly commented on the Trade Centre bombing, its spiritual leader, Ali Khamenei, said this week that the United States and the West like to portray their country as a terrorist state. Tehran Radio has said the United States was "laying the groundwork to blame Iran" for the bombing.

Ariel Merari, head of the political violence research unit at Tel Aviv University, said he believed Iran's role was indirect and the bombing itself was an amateur production.

"My assessment... is that these guys who carried out the twin tower bombing did it on their own decision, with general Iranian support for the group, it is quite clear that the way they did it was rather amateurish," he said.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

17:30 Pif el Heroule
17:45 Les Magazines
18:15 L'ecole des fans
19:00 News in French
19:15 Interrogue
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Chance in a Million
21:10 Forever Green
22:00 News in English
22:30 Peure film.

PRAYER TIMES

45:02 Fajr
18:31 (Sunrise) Duhr
11:40 Duhr
15:12 Asr
17:54 Maghreb
19:17 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swellish
Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785.
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624591.
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637441.

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terzian Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541.

Anglican Church Tel. 625303, Tel. 625433.

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.

Assiout International Church Tel. 625236.

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 324328.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 823824 and 649872.

Church of the Nazareth Tel. 675491.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

The Kingdom will remain under the effects of unstable weather conditions. Therefore, it will be partly cloudy to cloudy, with scattered showers of rain associated with thunder activity expected at times. Also a drop in temperatures will take and winds will be southeasterly fresh, gusting at times and causing dust in desert areas. In Aqaba, winds will be southerly fresh and seas rough.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Min./max. temp. 8 / 18

Aqaba 13 / 25
Dahsh 6 / 21
Jordan Valley 12 / 25

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 24, Aqaba 29. Humidity readings: Amman 21 per cent, Aqaba 39 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Mohammad Imran 612232
Dr. Isam Al Asmar 890504
Dr. Mohammad Amour 889883
Dr. Abdul Aziz Taboun 658081
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdous pharmacy 770336
Al Aqaba pharmacy 637033
Nairokh pharmacy 626772
Al Salam pharmacy 644945
Shamsi pharmacy 637660
Najla pharmacy 847632

IRBID:
Dr. Mazen Sharazi 773111
Al Ouds pharmacy 774111

EMERGENCIES

Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896391
Public Security Department 633211
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Complaints (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repair 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Husseini Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn 644281/8
Al-Jahat Maternity, J. Amn 622412
Jahat Amman Maternity 642362
Malhos, J. Amman 636140
Pakstine, Shamsi 664111/4
St. George's Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Musaber Hospital 667277/9
The Islamic, Abdali 666273/7
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Jahat, Al-Musaber 777101/3
Al-Badri, J. Adrahi 775112/6
Quora, Marfa 891611/5
Quora Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)863323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)800560
Jbo Sina Hospital (09)867332

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (09)52300-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
05:00 Singapore, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
07:15 Sanaa (RJ)
08:30 Riyadh (RJ)
09:45 New Delhi (RJ)
10:15 Beirut (RJ)
10:15 Cairo, Aqaba (RJ)

18:25 Colombo (RJ)
17:00 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
16:00 Abu Dhabi (RJ)
12:00 London, Berlin (RJ)
18:15 Bangkok, Calcutta (RJ)
19:10 Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
19:50 Athens, Larnaca (RJ)
21:00 Rome (RJ)

Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)99090
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275535
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272775
Im Al Nafes Hospital (02)247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)341411

Other Flights (Terminal 2)
10:30 Riyadh (SU)
12:00 Muscat, Abu Dhabi (GF)
17:00 Dubai (EM)
20:45 Cairo (MS)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:15 Beirut (RJ)
08:45 Aqaba, Rome (RJ)
11:05 Abu Dhabi (RJ)
11:15 Montreal, Toronto (RJ)
11:15 Larnaca, Athens (RJ)
12:15 Paris (RJ)
12:30 London (RJ)
16:30 Jeddah (RJ)
18:30 Bahrain Doha (RJ)
18:45 Damascus (RJ)
21:45 Dubai, Muscat (RJ)
21:45 Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)
05:55 Damascus, Paris (AF)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Apple 700 / 700
Banana 680 / 680
Banana (Mukammal) 620 / 620
Carrot 900 / 700
Cabbage 90 / 60
Cauliflower 180 / 100
Cucumbers (large) 120 / 60
Cucumbers (small) 220 / 180
Eggplant 340 / 260
Garlic 500 / 400
Grapes 240 / 180
Lemon 400 / 300
Marrow (large) 400 / 300
Marrow (small) 200 / 150
Mint 120 / 100
Onion (green) 320 / 280
Onion (dry) 280 / 200
Orange 470 / 200
Pepper (hot) 700 / 600
Pepper (sweet) 260 / 200
Potato 280 / 200
Spinach 100 / 50

Sharif Zeid, Palestinian team review talks

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Wednesday discussed with a Palestinian delegation headed by Director of the Palestine Liberation Organisation's (PLO) Political Department Farouk Al Kadoumi the outcome of the meeting of foreign ministers of Arab countries involved in the peace talks with Israel which concluded in Damascus Monday.

At a meeting held at the Prime Ministry, Sharif Zeid and the Palestinian side agreed to continue their coordination in the Middle East peace process. The two sides also dwell on the outcome of contacts and meetings held between the Palestinian delegation and the U.S. administration to remove obstacles impeding the peace process.

The two sides also held a comprehensive assessment of the various aspects related to the peace

Meeting to address special education in the Arab World

AMMAN (Petra) — A semi-regional symposium dealing with planning and organising special education in the Arab World will open in Amman Sunday.

The Amman regional office of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) is arranging the five-day meeting in cooperation with the Ministry of Education.

UNESCO sources told the Jordan Times Wednesday that the question of integrating handicapped students into the general stream of education at the ministry's schools will be discussed.

The sources also said such integration, being introduced on a trial basis, entails bringing handicapped children to learn side by side with other students.

Jordan is the first Arab country to actively address this issue, following its long experience in special education programmes, said the sources.

Director of the Students Activities Department at the Ministry of Education Hassan Alaudin said participants from Jordan and several Arab countries will review working papers on current international as well as regional trends in providing special education to handicapped children.

Minister of Education Thouqan Al Hindawi will open the



Thouqan Al Hindawi

meetings, which are designed to help education policy-makers in the Arab World exchange views about special education at all levels, said Mr. Alaudin.

He said delegations attending the meeting come from Jordan, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Morocco, Tunisia, Oman, Syria, Palestine, Egypt and Libya, in addition to UNESCO participants.

Over and above marital snags: New tax

By Sa'ad G. Hattar
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Men married to two women or more are likely to suffer new financial, as well as marital, problems if a potential move to introduce "tax on polygamy" is translated into official action.

Studies are underway to look into the prospects of imposing a tax on polygamy in Jordan, a country engaged in an economic structural programme with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.

Informed sources said that those studies are geared towards two objectives: curbing polygamy and creating financial incentives for young couples to get married.

"Monies generated from the projected tax would stream into a special fund, to be created to help prospective couples," said one of the sources familiar with the studies.

Other financial and sociology experts, however, are divided on whether to levy fixed fees for each case or introduce a slash system of taxes proportional to the number of wives.

"If this draft law sees the light, Jordan's would be the first kind of system designed to make money out of multiple marriages," one sociologist said.

But in addition to supporting the Treasury, the revenues would be steered towards providing soft-loans and grants to thousands of young men, who fail to unite with their better halves on a financial basis," one of the researchers said.

Most Jordanians tend to stick to one spouse for economic and social reasons.

Nevertheless, many multiple marriages still flourish, mainly in

the countryside and poorer areas.

In the absence of official statistics, the civil service department put the number of polygamy cases in Jordan at roughly several thousands.

It was not immediately clear how much revenue the state would generate from levying the tax, but studies expect the figure to be in the region of JD 10 million annually.

"The system is still under study but tentative estimates have put the projected figure at JD 10 million," a researcher said. While clared at the prospect of raising more funds for the Treasury, economists involved in the studies are nevertheless sceptical about the chances of such a tax ever passing through the bi-cameral Parliament.

"It would be difficult to pass any such law especially since it is linked to the IMF economic programme," said a centrist deputy.

"The conservatives, the ultraconservatives, maybe even the leftists will certainly defeat it."

If the law "by some miracle" goes through, on the other hand, the tax revenues would pour into a special fund aimed at paving the way for single couples to unite in holy matrimony.

Soft loans reaching JD 10,000 might be available for young marriage seekers who cannot otherwise pay the cost.

Over and above, the candidate would also get JD 5,000 in grants earmarked to build a house on land provided by the state, a senior source said.

This source also disclosed that he conducted polls on young Jordanians interested in the scheme. They were eager to join the "productive project," he claimed. "Even married men have shown interest in the project," he joked.

April to see upswing in inter-Arab economic talks

AMMAN (Petra) — April is expected to witness positive moves to improve joint Arab economic activities largely aimed at increasing the volume of trade among Arab states, according to Burhan Dajani, secretary general of the Arab Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture. During the month, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) will organise a seminar in Abu Dhabi in cooperation with Arab states to discuss developing and improving trade relations and to facilitate

the flow of goods between Arab states, according to Dr. Dajani.

Furthermore, the Arab Economic and Social Council will hold a meeting at the Arab League headquarters in Cairo on April 10, the first of its kind since the Gulf crisis, in order to discuss reviving inter-Arab economic activities and joint ventures, the secretary general added.

He said the Arab League Secretariat has prepared a working paper providing ideas on ways to promote inter-Arab trade.

Another meeting will be held in Damascus on April 15 for governors of Arab funds, he said.

Dr. Dajani, who was speaking before his departure for Beirut to discuss arrangements for the Abu Dhabi meeting, referred to the economic situation in Jordan as having made impressive strides in developing over the last three years in the wake of the Gulf crisis.

The magnitude of the economic and social pressures faced by the Kingdom because of the Gulf

crisis was far greater than the country could bear, Dr. Dajani said.

Praising Jordan's handling of the crisis and its attempts to achieve economic growth, Dr. Dajani said that the Kingdom would certainly assume a leading economic position among the countries of the region, in view of its central geographical location in the Arab World and its highly experienced and skillful manpower resources.

Political activist opts for research

By Sausan Ghosheh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Trading politics for culture has become a trend in Jordan, as many political party leaders and cadres resign from their parties, shift gears and decide to focus on cultural and educational issues.

Hani Al Hourani, a political party member since the mid-1960s, left his position in the Jordanian Democratic Progress Party and opened a social science research centre in Amman, Al-Urdun Al-Jadid Research Centre.

Mr. Hourani said he entered into politics because he was "interested in art and cultures."

Before becoming politically active, he spent much of his time painting and writing. Affected by the political situation in the 1960s, like many of his contemporaries, he felt it necessary to join a political party.

After the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, Mr. Hourani said, political parties gave precedence to politics over cultural and educational issues.

Bringing about change through education was perceived as a long and difficult process, he added.

Instead, the parties emphasised arm struggle as the method for change and liberation, Mr. Hourani said, adding that this focus reduced the importance of cultural issues.

His party, he explained, like all other parties gave little credence to the importance of research.

They were more interested in the number of people they could attract to the party, thus making it known as a party for the masses.

In the 1970s Mr. Hourani moved to Beirut, and there, he said, he grew culturally and became interested in research.

But because of party affiliation, he explained, he was unable to totally devote himself to research.

"I learned to divide the 24-hour day into two working days. In the morning, I worked as party member, and at night, I spent my time reading and researching," Mr. Hourani said.

He believes "politics and culture should complement each

other. Culture is as important as politics, and any political issue has a cultural and educational dimension," he said, thus, if political parties are neglecting culture, then others should work in this field.

Political parties, according to Mr. Hourani, are concerned with current issues. Intellectuals, on the other hand, should combine their interests and efforts for a better future, he said.

Mr. Hourani believes that the cultural framework in Jordan is "superficial," therefore, the public is easily frustrated.

He believes it is the role of intellectuals to create new horizons and to form an independent "identity" that would benefit from Arab "heritage." "Culture," he said, "should reshape society."

Society cannot be changed by elitist organisations, he added. Thus, the role of research centres, according to Mr. Hourani, is to encourage and stimulate "Jordanians to think for themselves."

These centres should be for people who are interested in scientific research, and not for those

who want to defend a party or government line, he emphasised.

Mr. Hourani said the Jordanian society is still "unresearched" politically, economically and socially.

Al-Urdun Al-Jadid research centre, of which he is president, is planning to publish studies on political parties and institutions in Jordan.

Mr. Hourani believes these publications will reinforce democracy, since some political parties still operate as if they are secret organisations.

The centres' next project will be to "introduce the Jordanian people to their history and society" and to outline the role Jordan will play in all spheres in the future, Mr. Hourani said.

But the centres' job is impeded by problems arising from the lack of trained researchers in Jordan, as well as by the requirement to obtain the Department of Press and Publication's approval before publishing.

This, Mr. Hourani explained, is "unhealthy" and prolongs the process.

House issues solidarity statement in final session

By Elia Nasrallah
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN (Petra) — In its final session before recess, the Lower House of Parliament Wednesday issued a statement saluting the Palestinian people and voicing support for their continued struggle for freedom.

The statement said the Land Day anniversary this year found the Palestinian people still under Israeli occupation and at the height of their national struggle for freedom.

It called on the free people of the world and international organisations to extend support to those oppressed Palestinians.

The Parliament statement also referred to Iraq and Libya, voicing total solidarity with the Iraqi and Libyan people in their confrontation with what they called "international injustice" represented in the economic sanctions imposed on the two countries.

The statement said the time has come for a re-examination of the composition of the U.N. Security Council in light of the political and economic international changes.

It said the House fully supports His Majesty King Hussein's views in this regard.

The statement called on Arab states to unify their ranks and pledged that the Jordanian Parliament was absolutely committed to working towards this end.

International experts to help implement environment strategy

By Elia Nasrallah
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Switzerland-based International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), which helped Jordan formulate its national strategy on the environment, is preparing to help the Kingdom implement projects with a direct impact on the environment.

Director of the Department of Environment at the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Saleh Al Share' said two IUCN experts, Luther Gundling and Omar Niman, are currently exploring ways to help the country finance environmental protection projects, by the

ministries of Agriculture, Health, Water and Irrigation and other departments.

Mr. Share' told the Jordan Times that the two experts will enlist the help of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in this respect.

USAID had provided more than \$360,000 to cover the cost of preparing the strategy which was unveiled last year, Dr. Share' said.

A workshop to discuss the implementation of the strategy will be held here Thursday with the participation of a USAID representative along with representatives of the Royal Scientific Society (RSS), the Royal Society for

the Conservation of Nature (RSCN), the Jordanian Society for the Control of Environmental Pollution (JSCPEP), as well as the legal advisors to the ministries of Tourism, Energy and Health, said Dr. Share'.

He said his department had earlier circulated notes to the various government departments requesting them to list projects they intend to implement and which have a direct impact on the environment, so that they could be discussed with the IUCN team.

One such project is the Ministry of Transport's plan to green the areas around the Queen Alia International Airport (QAIA), said Dr. Share'.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

King sends message to Bahraini Emir

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Wednesday sent a written message to the Emir of Bahrain, Sheikh Isa Ben Salman Al Khalifa. The message, which was delivered by Jordan's Ambassador to Bahrain Shaker Arabiyat, dealt with the latest developments on the Arab and international arenas and issues of common interest between the two countries. Mr. Arabiyat's meeting with Sheikh Isa was attended by Bahraini Foreign Minister Mohammad Ben Mubarak Al Khalifa. Also on Wednesday, King Hussein sent a cable to Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani congratulating him on the anniversary of the establishment of the Islamic Iranian Republic. King Hussein wished Mr. Rafsanjani continued good health and happiness and the Iranian people further progress and prosperity. His Majesty Wednesday delegated Zarqa governor Talaat Al Nawaiseh to convey his condolences to the Khalafat family over the death of Haj Mustafa Al Khalafat.

Prince attends PSD boat delivery

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah Ben Al Hussein, on behalf of His Majesty King Hussein Wednesday attended a ceremony for the delivery of two medium-class police boats from Germany to the Public Security Department (PSD). The Prince also presented the Jordanian Al Kawakab Medal of the Second Order to the head of the German delegation, Wolfgang Schreiber, who delivered the rebuilt boats and is now holding talks with the PSD on scopes of cooperation in security related affairs. Mr. Schreiber, who is also Director of the German Ministry of Interior's Security Affairs Department, said his government was eager to promote cooperation with Jordan in all areas. He said the two boats will help the PSD deal with what he called international criminal operations — kidnapping, terrorism, and drug trafficking. The question of combating drug trafficking has been at the centre of the Jordanian-German talks over the last two days, said Mr. Schreiber.

Yemeni president receives Jordan's envoy

SANAA (Petra) — Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh Wednesday received Jordanian Ambassador to Yemen Ahmad Al Adallah who handed him a written message from His Majesty King Hussein. The message dealt with bilateral relations and issues of common interest. The meeting was attended by Yemen's Permanent Representative at the United Nations Abdullah Al Ashtal.

City planners review Sheikh Hussein area

AMMAN (Petra) — The Higher City Planning Council of the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and Environment Wednesday held a meeting under the chairmanship of Minister Abdul Razzaq Tubeishat. Participants in the meeting discussed amendments to the organisational plans in the Sheikh Hussein area of the northern Jordan Valley and land use in the area of the Queen Alia International Airport (QAIA) among other organisational issues.

Young environmentalists hold meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — Director of the Environment Department at the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Saleh Al Share' Wednesday said Jordan is considered to be one of the distinguished states in the field of combatting environmental pollution. At a meeting with members of the Environmental Protection Club of Al Hussein Secondary School for girls, Mr. Share' stressed the need to enhance cooperation between the private and public institutions concerned with environmental protect, with the aim of spreading awareness among citizens of the importance of conserving the environment. "We are working for a green Jordan, a safe environment and clean air and water to protect the safety of human beings in this homeland," Mr. Share' told the students. The Environment Department, he said, has prepared, in cooperation with the concerned institutions, a study on planting "a green belt of forest and fruit trees from the north to the south of the Kingdom, with a width of three to five kilometres" to act as a shield to protect Jordan from desertification.

HCST/RSS head meets with visiting Korean counterparts

AMMAN (Petra) — Secretary General of the Higher Council of Science and Technology (HCST) and President of the Royal Scientific Society (RSS) Bani Al Mulki received in Amman Wednesday a delegation representing the Korean Ministry of Science and Technology. Dr. Mulki briefed the Korean delegation on Jordan's developmental plans in the fields of science and technology, outlining the aspects of industrial investments in the Kingdom and stressing the need to exchange expertise between the two countries. The delegation's visit comes as part of the HCST's plans to benefit from the experience of some countries in scientific and technological development. The Korean delegation also visited the Royal Scientific Society and toured its centres and departments.

Trade ministry official visits Zarqa office

ZARQA (Petra) — Secretary General of the Ministry of Industry and Trade Marwan Awad visited Wednesday the ministry's office in Zarqa governorate and inspected the services it offers to citizens. Mr. Awad discussed with officials at the office ways of developing its work and expanding its services. Mr. Awad also visited the Zarqa Chamber of Commerce and met with the president and members of its board. The meeting involved a discussion of ways to enhance cooperation between the chamber and the ministry.

Meteorologists celebrate meteorology day

AMMAN (Petra) — The Meteorology Department Wednesday celebrated the World Meteorology Day along with member states in the International Meteorology Organisation. The day is celebrated this year under the motto "Meteorology and the Transfer of Technology." For the occasion, the department organised an exhibition which included equipment used in monitoring weather changes.

Israel keeps Palestinians under siege

(Continued from page 1)

West Bank in two as travel between north and south means passing through Jerusalem.

"As you see if we cannot go to Jerusalem we don't have work," said driver Mukhlis Khoury, a soldier at a roadblock confiscated his permit to enter the city.

"Every day they shoot a Palestinian like a bird," said another driver at the checkpoint. "But when a few Israelis are killed they go crazy."

The ratio of Arabs to Israelis killed during much of the Palestinians' five-year-old uprising against Israeli rule has been 10-1.

But the number of Israelis killed or wounded, mainly in knifings, has soared since December when Mr. Rabin expelled to Lebanon 415 Palestinians he alleged were Muslim activists.

Arabs have killed 13 Israelis this month, the highest monthly toll in nearly four years. Television and newspapers have been filled with unprecedented pictures of gory bodies, reinforcing public anxiety about the attacks.

Security sources called the measures largely symbolic and doubted their long-term effectiveness.

"By repeatedly resorting to collective punishment, they are not addressing the real issues and it only aggravates the situation here," said Hanan Ashrawi, spokeswoman for the Palestinian delegation to the stalled peace talks.

Mr. Rabin acknowledged the closure may increase violence inside the occupied territories where many of the recent attacks on Israelis have taken place.

The crackdown was the harshest since the 1991 Gulf war and was likely to further erode support among the Palestinians for the peace talks.

The closure also was a blow to the shaky Palestinian economy, which depends on Arabs doing menial work in Israel. The police minister proposed banning all private West Bank and Gaza cars from entering Israel once the closure is lifted, a move that would drastically cut the number of Palestinian workers.

"We sealed the territories for an unlimited period of time to bring calm and tranquility and to stop this friction between the two entities, the two peoples," said Rabin spokesman Gad Ben-Ari.

But Dr. Ashrawi said the crackdown would only heighten frustration. "I think the closure is an escalation of collective punishment," Dr. Ashrawi said. "It will contribute to the causes that have created the cycle of violence."

She called for "a genuine separation, a disengagement, by ending occupation."

Dr. Ashrawi said Palestinians have not decided whether to attend the next round of peace talks, scheduled to begin April 20 in Washington.

The permanent ban on all private West Bank and Gaza cars

entering Israel was made by Police Minister Moshe Shahal who said he had the support of most government ministers. Shahal spokesman Rafi Levy said the idea still needed cabinet approval.

Most of the 110,000 Palestinians working in Israel get to work in private cars.

At the same time, Israel's contractors association announced it would fire all 65,000 Palestinian workers and try to replace them with Israelis.

About 500 Palestinian workers were detained in police raids in Israel on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, the army said it beefed up forces in the occupied territories but gave no figures. Soldiers were given permission to fire without warning at armed

Palestinians, military officials said. In the past, troops had to shout warnings before opening fire at armed men.

"This time, we are going all the way, and with large forces, to strike against terror and the gangs of wanted people," the daily Haaretz quoted a source close to Rabin as saying.

Regular troops increased patrols and set up surprise roadblocks and new rooftop observation posts, the army said. Undercover units disguised as Palestinians stepped up raids for suspects, news reports said.

The army also has permission to make extensive arrests and conduct house-to-house searches to find wanted people, Haaretz said.

Egypt wants groups to condemn militants

(Continued from page 1)

in the past year in a surge of political violence.

The Egyptian government sees no difference between the Muslim Brotherhood, whose stated aims is the achievement of a purist Islamic state through peaceful means and Al Gama'a Al Islamiya (Islamic group), which is working for the same goal through violence.

Mr. Hudaibi said the government policy of confrontation with the militants would achieve nothing. He called for an overall plan of political, economic and social reforms to break the cycle of violence.

Mr. Musa acknowledged that unemployment, inflation and other economic hardships swelled the ranks of Muslim militant groups but said the government lacked resources to deal with the problems.

"The government is trying to solve these problems but the gap between what is possible and what is ideal is still wide," Mr. Musa said. "We must handle the problem with what we have."

A parliamentary report said the collapse of government services in parts of the country and "provocative treatment" of citizens by officials helped the militants to recruit among Egypt's poor and dispossessed youth.



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Jordan Times

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Bouquets and brickbats

THUS ENDS the fourth and last ordinary session of Jordan's 11th Parliament.

Lower House Speaker Abdul Latif Arabiyat says deputies' achievements in four years of work were "unprecedented." Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker says cooperation between the two branches provided the opportunity for building a pluralistic Jordan and the state of law. Critics point to many blunders and disappointments and unfinished business.

We acknowledge the achievements and recognise the mistakes. But what we emphasise most is that both the shortcomings and the successes of the last four years of parliamentary life in Jordan were equally essential for consolidating the democratic tradition that the country is slowly but steadily building.

The 11th Parliament was elected in the shadow of popular discontent over economic hardships, political frustration and social unease. It accordingly shaped the early days of the House, placing emphasis on sometimes emotional rhetoric to please ears yearning for criticism and on others directing efforts towards securing political freedoms and individual rights.

Four years later, things have changed substantially. The House deserves credit for legislation that broadened — yet not fully ensured — political freedoms: Lifting the Martial Law, endorsing the Political Parties Law and the Press and Publications Law, which despite its all shortcomings, are all improvements upon their predecessors.

But deputies also deserve criticism for an unsatisfactory performance on issues related to the economy: Poverty, inflation and unemployment, showering these pressing concerns with emotional speeches but providing little real solutions to redress them.

Deputies' greatest failure was their inability to free themselves from their perception of their role as opposition figures who can please themselves and their constituencies by merely rejecting the status quo, without offering much to redress the problems.

Despite all that, however, the 11th Parliament served to strengthen the young roots of democracy in the country. That on its own is an achievement.

But the task of saving and building on it is the duty of the next Parliament and the duty of the people who will elect it.

When Jordanians go to the polls later this year, they have to carefully assess the performance of their representatives and clearly identify the goals that they want their deputies to attain.

What Jordan needs most in the coming stage is people who understand its problems and have the qualifications to solve them. They don't need representatives skilled at choosing words and playing emotional tunes. They need economists, technocrats and politicians who are willing to respect the opposing point of view and respect the most important pillar of democracy: Pluralism.

The records of the outgoing House provide all with insight into how each of the 80 deputies performed and how each political trend sees the future of Jordan.

The future that we look for is one of tolerance, pluralism and progress based on the respect of the individual and the best utilisation of resources.

The outgoing House took the first steps in that long journey. The regime, headed by His Majesty King Hussein, has given all indications that democracy is the choice of the future and the journey will continue uninterrupted. Jordanians will decide on how far it will reach and whether the next Parliament will be able to shoulder the responsibility.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTRIES

EVERY PALESTINIAN martyr, that fell or will fall opens the door of paradise before the Palestinian people and paves the way for the Arab people's return to their homeland, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily. Every Israeli that is being killed or will be killed opens the door for the rest of his people to go to hell because these people have been the cause of the Palestinian and Arab children and causing untold suffering for the Palestinian families, the paper added. Because of Israel's atrocities we are overjoyed over the killing of the Israeli troops and happy to see the Palestinian martyrs rising to heaven, said the paper. Although more Palestinians are killed than the Israelis, this is a temporary situation because sooner or later more Israelis will be killed as the holy warriors continue the struggle and continue to fight the aggressors to put an end to the occupation, the paper said. What has been happening recently added the daily is a rebellion and a popular uprising on the part of the Palestinians who will not be deterred in their just endeavour by the Israeli enemy, the United States or the Western allies, the paper said. It said that no one can stop the Palestinian people from pursuing the struggle and no one can prevent the ignominious defeat of the enemies of the Arab people and the Muslims. The Palestinians are not discouraged by the falling of the martyrs, but the Israelis hearts are full of horror and fear of their fate, added the paper. It said that nothing can stop the Palestinian people's intifada and no one can prevent the liberation of the Palestinian homeland.

IT SEEMS that Israel has no other tool to confront the Palestinian intifada except through escalating terrorism against the Palestinian people, said Al Dustour daily Wednesday. Resorting to what it calls security measures, Israel is embarking on repressive actions that proved their futility over the long years of occupation, said the daily. The Land Day anniversary marked a real transformation in the means adopted by the Palestinians to fight the aggressors and showed that the intifada, is growing and intensifying in all forms and ways, said the daily. It said the Israeli siege clamped on the occupied Gaza Strip and the West Bank can by no means stifle the spirit of resistance nor can it subdue the rebellion and discourage the daring youths who are spearheading the struggle against occupation. Although Israeli leaders realise the futility of the repressive measures and the siege imposed on the Arabs, they are intent on pursuing the same old measures, hoping to subdue the Arab population, said the daily. But, it said, the Palestinians are defying the siege and they are determined more than any time in the past to wrest their rights by all means.

Reflections

The case for growth-oriented tax incentives

By Safwan Bataineh

MANUFACTURING IN Jordan enjoys two types of incentives: a high tariff protection from imports and income tax exemptions under the Encouragement of Investment Law. While the deleterious effects of tariff protection on exports and growth have been fully recognised, the subtle yet far more damaging influence of the Encouragement of Investment Law has largely escaped notice. Tariff protection creates a bias against both exports and investment because producers could cater to a protected and captive local market at high near monopolistic prices which, in turn, negate any incentive to invest in productivity and cost efficiency. Furthermore, the small size of the local market means that producers can reach production targets with a minimal investment in capacity and have little use for investing in growth.

The Encouragement of Investment Law, first introduced in 1972, offers manufacturers a tax holiday for several years for merely setting up shop. As such, the law tends to reinforce the bias inherent in the tariff protection as producers seek to maximise early profits in order to capture the tax benefits by minimising investment and production capacity and targeting their shoddy and costly products to the high-margin domestic market.

Worst of all, these tax holidays constitute a terrible waste of public revenue since the tariff protection alone provides sufficient incentive for import substitution manufacturing. No wonder then that the manufacturing base (excluding mining) has remained below 13 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) since 1977, the first year for which statistics are available, or that manufacturing exports in dollar terms registered minimal growth between 1988 and 1992 and grew by only 20 per cent since 1984. When measured in German marks, these same exports were 30 per cent lower in 1991 than in 1984.

The World Bank (WB) report on manufacturing industries in Jordan (1988) draws a bleak picture about an inefficient and uncompetitive manufacturing sector dominated by small and weak firms with little growth potential. This lack of export capability led to disinvestment and shrinkage during periods of falling domestic demand. Between 1984 and 1990, the book value of fixed assets in the whole industrial sector dropped in every year even though replacement prices rose sharply in JD terms after 1988.

The table below provides additional proof of the absence of growth-oriented incentives in the economy. The table compares a group comprising the fastest growing public shareholding companies in Jordan with all other shareholding companies in the same sector. This group was defined as to include every non-government, non-financial public shareholding company which managed to increase sales by 150 per cent or more between 1986 and 1990 in a consistent and uniform manner while maintaining profitability.

The dean's list includes only six manufacturers in pharmaceuticals, textiles, plastics, and packaging materials. Three other companies were excluded because of a non-uniform sales growth pattern, indicating a temporary window of opportunity. One was excluded because of clear monopoly advantage. A fifth company was disqualified because of well-publicised management problems. (See table)

When comparison is made between this group of six and all other manufacturing shareholding companies, two distinct profiles emerge from under the debris of numbers. One of a hard working and ambitious organisation, set on expansion through investment and exports (69 per cent of sales). The other of a slothful hit and run operator who, having chosen the comforts of the protected home market, was hit hardest by falling demand during the recession.

The second profile depicts the typical Jordanian company: a feeble corporate character which acquired a lot of nasty habits over two decades of state patronage, high tariffs, low competition, and inward looking investment and trade policies. Poor sales growth, low export to sales ratio (13 per cent), disinvestment, and a predilection to short-termism are just a few of its vices. The combined sales of all 28 public shareholding manufacturing companies (excluding mining firms) of the second group increased by a paltry 46 per cent between 1986 and 1990. Taking into account the decline in the value of the Jordanian dinar, sales would show a drop of 23 per cent during the same period. As for investment, only three companies have managed to avoid running down their stock of capital. In the service sector, the picture gets much worse. Not a single company listed on the stock exchange has managed to increase sales in constant 1986 dinars while maintaining profitability.

The comparison shows clearly the need to modify the tax

	Fastest growing companies	All other listed manufacturers
Sales Growth 1986-1990	250%	46%
Export ratio	69%	13%
Dividends payout ratio	33%	71%
Growth of fixed assets 1986-1990	48%	(22%)
Effective tax rate 1986-1990	28%	12%

incentives available to manufacturers (as the sector with the greatest growth potential). None of the companies in the group of six enjoyed a tax holiday during the period under study and the group paid a 28 per cent effective tax rate over the five years. On the other hand, 10 firms in the second group received tax exemptions under the Encouragement of Investment Law even though nine of those 10 companies were guilty of disinvestment. The overall effective tax rate for the profitable companies in the second group (excluding the refinery and the cement co.) was only 12 per cent. The current system of incentives in Jordan seems to reward inefficiency and disinvestment and penalise investment, growth and exports.

Rehabilitation goes beyond the simple task of modifying the incentives. Bringing down tariff rates any further may cause withdrawal shocks that can kill the patient. Such a treatment will also jeopardise the objective of balancing the budget and whittle away precious foreign reserves. Moreover, it will do nothing to reform companies in services and other sectors.

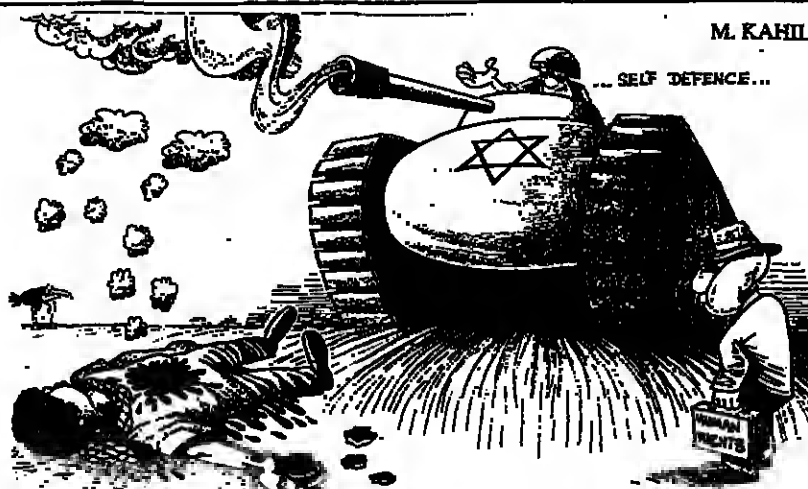
A better approach is group therapy. Expert counselling, large doses of competition, and vigorous daily exercises in the open air are far more effective means of nursing the patient into physical fitness and sharpening his corporate wits. If administered properly, therapy should cure him from craving after the quick fixes of cheap and easy profits and raise his sight upward and towards the vast horizons of foreign markets.

Only by trusting the private sector to respond to market signals and follow up on commercial opportunities can the overseers of the economy begin to understand the difference between market failure or policy failure or appreciate the distinction between intervention and substitution

But first, the therapists and their methods must be selected carefully. It would be the height of insincerity and bad taste if those same patronising orderlies who first pushed our companies into the dark cellars of underachievement should be the ones assigned to goad them out again into the fields of contest. Sneers and bitter laughter would be the only response emanating from below.

Rehabilitation is to be conducted by specialists who have a clear understanding of the problem and the purpose of their mission. Above all, they must have an unwavering faith in private endeavour and a healthy respect for the powers of greed (or the pursuit of self-interest, if you like) to create value when channelled properly.

Only by trusting the private sector to respond to market signals and follow up on commercial opportunities can the overseers of the economy begin to understand the difference between market failure and policy failure or appreciate the distinction between intervention and substitution. Only then will they stop blaming the private sector for all economic shortcomings and start placing the blame where it has always belonged: on faulty signals and short-sighted policies.



Russia's chaotic future

By Alan Cooperman
The Associated Press

MOSCOW — Going into political combat with the Russian congress last week, President Boris Yeltsin predicted that "there will be no winners," he turned out to be right.

The Congress of People's Deputies wrapped up its four-day emergency session Monday without removing Mr. Yeltsin or his main political rival — in fact, without really resolving anything at all.

The conventional wisdom both in Russia and abroad seems to be that the draw is bad, because it dooms the country to more chaos and collision: a referendum, new elections, a battle over a new constitution.

"The confrontation that was taking place before the congress will simply continue, and that won't produce anything good," said Boris Anoshkin, a deputy from Samursk in Russia's far east. "We should be focusing now on the economy, not on politics, because the living standards of our people are falling catastrophically."

But some deputies are bappy there is still an even struggle for

power between Mr. Yeltsin and his rival, parliament speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov — and more generally, between the legislative and executive branches of government.

"The custom here was always for one party, one group, to hold total power," said Ernst Muldashev, an eye surgeon and legislator from the Ural mountains city of Ufa.

"It looks to me like both sides are still seeking total power. Probably that's to be expected. A country that lived for 60 years under dictatorship cannot immediately become a normal democracy."

Mr. Muldashev said he had voted Sunday to keep both Mr. Yeltsin and Mr. Khasbulatov in office and preserve the balance between the country's main political groupings.

"If either side really wins, it could lead to totalitarianism, because like it or not, that's our tradition," he said.

Mr. Yeltsin narrowly survived the parliamentary attempt to remove him: 617 lawmakers voted by secret ballot for his ouster, just 72 short of the two-thirds majority needed.

Mr. Khasbulatov also survived,

although 319 lawmakers — nearly a third of the congress — favoured his removal. It was the first significant revolt against the speaker, but probably not the last, as deputies voiced growing disenchantment with his behind-the-scenes maneuvering and heavy-handed manipulation of debate.

The next battlefield is clear. The congress approved Mr. Yeltsin's plan for a nationwide referendum on April 25 but sought to stack the ballot questions against him.

Mr. Yeltsin had proposed to resolve the power struggle by asking whether voters trust him or the congress.

The lawmakers agreed Sunday to pose the question of confidence in the president. But in a particularly blatant act of political cowardice, they decided not to ask whether the nation has confidence in the congress.

Deputies also added the question, "do you approve of the socio-economic policies of the president?" That was a smart move by Mr. Yeltsin's opponents, who realise that although he is popular, his painful free-market reforms are not.

Other ballot question added by the congress would call presidential and parliamentary elections. As the session drew to a close, Mr. Yeltsin's Press Secretary Vyacheslav Kostikov lashed out with increasingly strident rhetoric.

The parliament, he said, "has violated all the thinkable and unthinkable limits of political decency and human morality."

Mr. Kostikov also warned that Mr. Yeltsin might reject the congress' ballot questions and hold his own plebiscite — raising the legal and logistical nightmare of dueling referendums.

Chaos also could result from the parliament's decision to dismiss Mr. Yeltsin's regional administrators across Russia. The president is likely to ignore the decision. But local officials may now disobey the administrators, citing the congress' decision.

Mr. Khasbulatov, matching Kostikov's rhetoric, concluded the congress by claiming it had stopped a "coup d'etat" by Mr. Yeltsin. But the truth was that Yeltsin backed away from his March 20 announcement of "special rule" even before the congress convened.

LETTER

Shipping to Aqaba

To the Editor,

IN A statement Mr. Tawfiq Kaware, the chairman of the Jordanian Shipping Agents Association (JSAA) in the Jordan Times issue of March 22, highlighted the decision of Red Sea Express (RSE) to continue serving Aqaba port directly from North European ports, which we appreciate; being working in the shipping community in Jordan. Nevertheless, we disagree with Mr. Kaware when he considered RSE as the only international shipping line to continue regular sailings throughout the Gulf crises, despite the difficulties brought on the imposition of sanctions against Iraq and overzealous enforcement of the embargo. Other international lines also kept serving Aqaba port with fully dedicated regular liner services from Europe, Mediterranean ports and the Far East at the same time.

For instance, Sudan Shipping Lines (SSL), the leading Arab shipping line in the Red Sea, made (41) calls on Aqaba port in 1990 and 34 calls in 1991 in spite of the tough measures taken by the U.N. allied forces against them and the continued loss of Aqaba services. SSL suffered from being delayed at inspection points every time its ships called on Aqaba. Its ships were diverted five times.

Rickmers Lines, the German carriers, kept calling on Aqaba and its ships were diverted to Suez two times. In 1990, they made nine calls on Aqaba and 12 calls in 1991.

Gearbulk, the Norwegian carriers, made 11 calls in 1990 and eight calls in 1991 and one of its ships was diverted.

Mitsui O.S.K. Lines, the leading Japanese carriers, never stopped calling on Aqaba as well; they made nine calls in 1990 and other nine in 1991. One of its ships was diverted by international forces in 1990.

Sudan Lines, Rickmers Lines, Gearbulk and Mitsui O.S.K. Lines, amongst many others, are still serving Aqaba regularly on direct sailings.

We also disagree with Mr. Kaware regarding the feeder services to Aqaba as he mentioned that such services adversely affect the prominence of Aqaba. In fact, we consider such services advantageous to Aqaba trade due to the following reasons:

1. The availability of feeder services from Jeddah to Aqaba enticed many lines to accept cargo to Aqaba, which was not possible to be on a direct service.
2. The new services on this trade reflected positively on the freight rates to and from Aqaba in favour of Jordan shippers and consignees.
3. The total performance of Aqaba trade was boosted for imports and exports in terms of containerised cargo.
4. The feeder ships were increased and the number of their calls to Aqaba was also increased.

Ibrahim Naouri,
T. Gargour & Pte.
Amman.

Politics bursts onto stage in Jordan

By Saleiman Al Khalidi
Reuters

AMMAN — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin picks up the phone and calls a jittery Saudi King Fahd to warn him about Islamic fundamentalism.

It's showtime in Jordan, where once-taboo politics have burst on to centre stage. "Rabin" and "King Fahd" are characters in Oil And Arab Robes, probably the first mainstream play funded by a hardline fundamentalist group — Islamic Jihad. It opened in Jordan after a run in the United States in front of mainly Arab audiences.

"It's fundamentalists who pose the real danger," the make-believe Rabin says to "King Fahd" as the play batters home a message that moderate Palestinian

leaders have sold out their people by supporting Middle East peace talks.

Arab dancers bound on to the stage. In the audience, among excited children and their veiled mothers, sits a gold-robed member of Islamic Jihad — Beit Al Maqdes.

"We sponsored the play because we felt it was an honest portrayal of the state of the Arab World today and was in line with our view," said the official, Nader Al Tamimi, after taking his front-row seat in Al Hussein Sports City auditorium. Islamic Jihad is banned in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and most Arab countries.

The play, part of a rebirth of political drama in Jordan, opens with a militant Islamic song of defiance and resistance. A video screens shots of Palestinian activists expelled

led by Israel to South Lebanon in December.

A message of violent opposition to Middle East peace talks, at odds with the official Jordanian line, is relayed in often-crude songs and dialogue that slam the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) as well as Israel and Britain, which once ruled parts of the region.

"The problem is not with the Palestinian leadership that has agreed with us since 1985... it's with those bearded men whom we are unable to talk to," the fictitious Rabin tells the Saudi monarch.

"The oil is your right, the land is your right... resist the Arabs who have become Jews," says an all-male chorus.

In a concession, however,

to the government-owned venue, the director has removed a final scene in which a fundamentalist shoots dead a secular Palestinian.

"Arafat could have been the Palestinian Samson if he had not given up armed struggle," cries the hero Antar, a stateless bedouin expelled from Kuwait, referring to the PLO chairman.

Antar, named after a legendary Arab Islamic hero known for courage and chivalry, ends up pumping petrol in the shadow of the Statue of Liberty and later hawking car-seat covers — "soft and comfortable, two for \$12" — on a New York street after refusing to succumb to the temptations of oil money in Kuwait.

Travelling in his dreams to a future Palestinian state, he is horrified to find a museum for foreigners desecrating

Jerusalem's holy Al Aqsa Mosque.

"What do Jews want more than this... their historic enemies have sat with them and given in to their demands," Antar says.

Director Adel Afaneh, a Palestinian-Jordanian who lived in Kuwait until the end of the 1991 Gulf War, brought the play to Jordan after taking it to mainly Arab audiences in five U.S. cities including Philadelphia and New York.

A believer in a "wholly Islamic Palestine", Afaneh does not hide his sympathy with Islamic militants in the occupied territories whom he glorifies as the fighters who sparked the Palestinian uprising against Israeli rule.

Jordan's easing of censorship on media and the arts over the last two years has

made possible the tirade of criticism levelled against Arab rulers ridiculed by name on stage.

"The emirs and sheikhs of the Arab World have changed their religion," says Antar, raging against rulers including King Fahd and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. "They seek only sensual and material pleasures while the poor Arabs languish in poverty."

Afaneh said the Jordanian government had cut such themes from some of his earlier plays.

"This time the censors did not read the full script," he said. "They've stopped under democracy routinely going through them."

The production, which has moved to the industrial city of Zarqa, has not exactly been a box office hit.

Diary

CHANGE OF MIND: The Diary had reported that Skip Gnehm, the U.S. ambassador to Kuwait, was almost a confirmed candidate to replace Ambassador Roger Harrison who is expected to leave the foreign service for an academic post soon. Embassy sources, we have to admit, say it is too early to say that Ambassador Gnehm has formally been assigned a new post "so it is too early to say whether he is or is not coming to Amman." But the State Department, according to other sources, is apparently nominating Ambassador Gnehm to the top post in Saudi Arabia. The embassy in Jordan is apparently still up for grabs among several nominees including Ambassador Charles Redman, who is currently ambassador to Sweden and had acted as spokesperson for the State Department during Mr. Reagan's time; Ambassador David Newton, who was U.S. ambassador to Iraq and has since held academic positions, as well as David Mack who currently acts as U.S. deputy assistant secretary of state and who formerly was the U.S. ambassador to Abu Dhabi. Any one of them will do, an American source said: "But the most natural choice is that of Mr. Mack." God knows why!

REHAULED: As part of its efforts to improve the standards of its staff and programmes, Jordan Television is springing some surprises for the new cycle: Summer of 1993. Although the management of JTV has kept a tight lid on what those surprises might be, the Diary's penetrating eyes could nevertheless assemble this picture for the expected change. First a JTV backgrounder on the issue at hand. "We know that our programmes during the past few months, especially during Ramadan, have made our viewers switch to other stations for entertainment. That is why we have made quick plans to re-attract Jordanians to JTV programmes. For the Arabic channel, JTV management has apparently commissioned the young Egyptian boy who has become famous in Jordan for his role in the Jabri chocolate advertisement "Tutu" to participate in a locally produced musical comedy television programme of 12 parts. JTV Channel 2 (English channel), however, has already made contacts with television programme distributors to provide them with the new British comedy shows and several American movie hits from last year. The children of Jordan are also expected to be the new highly-valued target of television entertainment efforts. JTV has decided to help produce a generation which is less gloomy and depressed than the older generations, and JTV believes that television is the perfect medium to encourage society to learn how to laugh. Children are more likely to respond to JTV's attempts than older people "who have become difficult to bring out. One of the most impressive of tactics employed will be the introduction of Walt Disney feature cartoons in the afternoons. JTV knows that it is a complete shift made in a very short time but it is certainly long overdue." Having seen (or actually read) the new JTV picture, you would think it's an April fools joke. But it is, thanks to the fact that JTV can only move if the whole country moves first. Light politics and heavy politicians: Helmut Kohl, Radi Alkhash and all.

SYKES-PICOT REVISITED: A diplomat at the British embassy, who is expected to leave Jordan for another diplomatic posting, is being replaced by a Mr. Roger Sykes who will take over as an economic and political officer. Now Jordanians are not necessarily afraid of reenacting history but after some of us heard that the French embassy is also replacing one of its prominent members with someone who carries the family name of Picot, the immediate feeling of a *deja vu* hit some. Those old enough remember that the two drew up an agreement dividing the region between England and France and providing a homeland in Palestine for Jews. It might all actually happen in a Jordan that is really not prepared to be the recipient of a new dose of the "new world order" but the truth is that only the first half of the story is true. The whole truth is that a Western diplomat who is very sympathetic with the British Council concocted the idea in order to protect Mr. Sykes. The diplomat thought it would be funny if he spread the rumour about a Mr. Jean Picot joining the ranks of the French embassy. It was just a case of the Brits covering their own... in their perpetual competition with the French.

ENCORE: As if to prove the point, British fate interacted with French fate to create friction with the press. The Jordan Times recently published an editorial congratulating French General Philippe Morillon for leading a U.N. convoy with food and medicine to the Bosnian town of Srebrenica which had been under constant bombardment by the Serbs. A British embassy diplomat immediately complained to the paper for giving too much credit to the French and forgetting that British soldiers had "guarded the road leading to the convoy's destination." This information, about the British role, was apparently published by an Arabic newsletter the embassy had distributed but nobody read. The Jordan Times would have liked the complaint to come in the form of a letter to the editor, but the Brits loathed publicity as a matter of course.

Nermeen Murad

They don't keep taking the tabloids

By Richard Harwood

THE NEW York Post, a "racy tabloid" newspaper specialising in "murder and mayhem," is dying proof of a recent homily from social scientist Peter Drucker: "Whenever a business keeps on going downhill, despite massive spending and heroic efforts by its people, the most likely cause is the obsolescence of its business theory."

The obsolete theory on which these tabloids have been based was introduced into American journalism 160 years ago. It produced a "penny newspaper" to satisfy a popular hunger for "human interest" stories ignored by the political rags and commercial journals of that time. "George, Nolke, a shabby, gentle specimen of the genus Homo, was charged with beating, a flat-faced German frau, whose physiognomy was about as inexpressive as a boiled turnip... (Nolke's) body looked like two pine boards encased in a piece of broad cloth." These papers were instantly successful and reached their zenith in the 1890s under the guidance of

Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst. They are now virtually extinct. Besides the Post, which may have expired by the time this column appears, the Boston Herald is about the only survivor.

The immigrant urban masses on which the tabloids depended have moved out to middle-class suburbs or have defected to the docudramas of television, the fantasy weeklies in the supermarkets, or the offerings of People magazine. The Post's circulation has dropped below 500,000, less than 5 per cent of metropolitan New York's potential newspaper buyers. Its audience is not held in high esteem by advertisers.

Rupert Murdoch, the Australian/British/U.S. press baron, owned the paper from 1976 until 1988 and lost \$150 million in the process. He once met with the owners and managers of the city's big department stores to plead for advertising support. He pointed out that through a variety of gimmicks he had gotten the Post's circulation up to nearly a million. One of the retail barons replied: "Yes, Mr. Murdoch, but

your readers are our shoplifters."

There is no longer an economic rationale for its existence or for daily newspapers like it in the American marketplace. In Britain, these tabloids flourish under the patronage of a large working class of modest educational attainments. But American newspaper readers have outgrown the genre. In nearly every city where there has been competition between the "respectable" middle-class press and its "sensationalist" rivals, respectability has won out. Incredibly, the best-selling newspaper in the New York metropolis is now the "elitist" Times, which more nearly reflects the interests and culture of Westport, Conn., than Brooklyn, the Bronx, or Queens.

The competition from other media has been a big factor in this shakeout. Of the 63 hours a week Americans devote to the "media" — everything from television and movies to books and the Top 40 on radio — only a little more than three hours involves daily newspapers: less than 30 minutes a day.

The economics of retailing and of retail advertising has been another factor. Ben Bagdikian, a popular critic of the press, has written that "mass advertising" has ordained that each city in the United States that has a daily paper will have only one. In a book a few years ago he elaborated his theory in explaining the triumph of The Washington Post over the two rivals it confronted in 1970:

"The Post had 500,000 circulation, the Star about 300,000, and the Daily News about 200,000... The cost of all three was roughly the same for preparing (and distributing) each day's editions... But because of the economies of scale, the Post's (cost) per copy was less... Advertising rates reflect these costs and the newspaper's reach as well. A full page ad in the Daily News in 1970 cost \$9,676; it cost a Star advertiser \$12,634 and a Post advertiser \$12,634 and a Post advertiser this figured out to a cost of 3.34 cents to reach one household served by The Post and nearly 5 cents to reach a subscriber of the

News. As a consequence, big advertisers poured more and more money into The Post and less and less money into the Star and the News. The News went out of business in 1972, and nine years later the Star went under.

There was another crucial factor in determining winners and losers in these newspaper competitions. The successful papers were the better papers, meaning they devoted more space and money than their rivals to the collection of news and less space and effort to the "sensationalist" coverage of murder, mayhem, and the lives and times of the demi-monde. They appealed, in short, to the upscale audiences, which spend money in quantities that impress the merchants who advertise in newspapers. It is generally believed that the New York Herald Tribune dug its own grave during World War II, when newspaper was in short supply. It cut back on space for news rather than cutting back on space for ads. The New York Times did the opposite and gained a permanent advantage with upscale con-

sumers, which, in turn, led to a postwar advantage with upscale advertisers and ultimately to the death of the Herald Tribune.

The dominant and monopolist papers today have nothing to fear from the "racy tabloids." But they have new competitors all across the media spectrum. Many papers, because of the advertising recession for the last two or three years, have cut back on news coverage, and, a la General Motors, IBM and other huge industrial corporations, have chopped away at news-gathering staffs. In these ways they have marginally improved their quarterly reports and given a modest boost to the price of their stocks. Whether those decisions were based on obsolete business theories is an unanswered question. It will be answered in the marketplace, not in tomorrow's Wall Street Journal.

Richard Harwood is a former ombudsman of The Washington Post. The above article is reprinted from the Guardian weekly newspaper.

Towards objectivity

Zealots For Zion: Inside Israel's West Bank Settlement Movement.
By Robert I. Friedman.
Random House. 263 pp. \$23

Sleeping On A Wire: Conversations With Palestinians in Israel.
By David Grossman.
Farrar Straus Giroux. 326 pp. \$22

THESE two insightful books are among a new genre of works on Israel that has grown in the past few years in the United States and appears to be setting a higher standard of objectivity for studies of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Although the new works are by no means basically antithetical to Israel, gone is the awed hero worship of Israelis and their achievements that marked books about Israel's first four decades of existence. These books sweep aside the clichés to reveal Israelis and Palestinians rich in diversity and intellectual questing in the midst of their confrontation. Robert I. Friedman and David Grossman are among the pioneers of the new genre. Friedman, an American Jew, and Grossman, an Israeli Jew, established their status with earlier works on Israel's far-right movement and the Palestinians. Now these two authors have turned their considerable talents to similar subjects that have been largely ignored in the United States.

In *Zealots For Zion*, Friedman focuses on Israel's messianic settlers, who would rather wage civil war than surrender the occupied territories. Grossman's *Sleeping On A Wire* examines through lengthy interviews the plight of the nearly one million Palestinians who are Israeli citizens but treated as though they are under occupation like their brethren in the territories. Both works are filled with colourful and conflict-ridden characters. Palestinian and Jewish alike, who make up the opulent human tapestry of modern Israel and Palestine.

Of the two books, Friedman's is likely to have more interest for Americans. It is not only a penetrating look at the violence prone Israeli zealots who are behind the aggressive establishment of Jewish settlements on Palestinian land in the occupied territories, but also at the Jewish Americans who encourage, justify, and help fund them. Among these Americans are such powerful figures as Laurence Tisch, the chairman of CBS. After Mike Wallace disputed on 60 Minutes the Israeli version carried by most U.S. media that Palestinians had started the 1990 riot on Jerusalem's Haram al-Sharif that resulted in the death of 17 Palestinians and the injury of 150 others, Tisch personally called on the carpet the respected reporter and 60 Minutes

producer Don Hewitt. Friedman reports that Tisch echoed complaints from right-wing Jewish Americans that Wallace's reporting had been unfair to Israel and demanded an explanation. Wallace and Hewitt — both of whom are Jewish — stuck by their story. They were later vindicated when an Israeli magistrate concluded a six-month investigation by reporting that the cause of the tragedy was, as Wallace had suggested, a police — and not a Palestinian — riot. Nonetheless, as any reporter knows, such direct intervention by management has a chilling effect.

It is pressure from American Zionists that helps explain why, as Rabbi Arthur Hertzberg notes, "What everyone in Israel knows as a matter of course is often denounced as false and subversive when quoted in America." Friedman shows an amusing example of such distortion when he describes a zealous American settler trying to convince fellow Americans that settlements by the extremist Gush Emunim group were founded in part on the teachings of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau. As Friedman notes, such settlements "had borrowed about as much from Emerson as... from Saint Francis of Assisi..."

BOOK REVIEW

Friedman amply demonstrates that Rabbi Moshe Levin, the founder and continuing leader of Gush Emunim, is anything but a Jewish transcendentalist. He is, rather, a fundamentalist who welcomes violent confrontations with the Palestinians, and was himself once jailed briefly for killing a Palestinian. When Jewish terrorists machine-gunned a classroom at the Islamic College in Hebron in 1983, killing three students and wounding 33, Leviner declared: "Whoever did this has sanctified God's name in public." Friedman asserts that organised pro-Israeli lobbies contribute to the distortion between what Israelis know and Americans don't. Friedman calls the most powerful of these groups the "neoconservative trinity" — AIPAC, the ADL and the Presidents' Conference. Of these, Friedman says, "The trinity didn't recognise the legitimacy of a 'loyal Zionist opposition.' As far as it was concerned, all criticism of Israel, whether espoused by anti-Zionist black militants like Leonard Jeffries, American nationalists like Pat Buchanan, or left-wing Labour Zionists like Abba Eban was a threat to Israel, and so had to be discredited."

Just how successful this trinity had been is illustrated by Grossman's *Sleeping On A Wire*, which explores the various injustices Israel has imposed on what it calls Arab Israelis. These Palestinians left stranded in territory that was to become Israel in 1948 after some 726,000 of their brethren were driven or fled from their land were granted

Israeli citizenship and are now a significant minority making up nearly 20 per cent of Israel's population. Yet in the United States they are an almost unknown component of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

In large part, the obscurity of the Palestinian citizens of Israel has resulted from the success of U.S. lobbying groups in discrediting critics of Israel's human rights abuses against its own Palestinian citizens. They have done this by challenging the credentials of the critics and maintaining that the Palestinians are fully integrated first-class citizens of Israel enjoying all the benefits of the state that Jews enjoy.

But if this is so, asks Grossman, where among the Palestinian minority "are the VCRs and the computers that you can find in almost every Jewish school? Where are the laboratories, the workshops, the sports facilities? Where are the counsellors?" Instead of equality, the Palestinian citizens have been systematically discriminated against. Not one Palestinian Israeli has ever been a government minister or a supreme court justice. Only three are employed (out of 1,000) at the Ministry of Justice. Palestinians make up 55 per cent of the Israeli families living under the poverty line, their villages receive only 6 per cent of Israel's development funds, and their farmers are allocated only 2.4 per cent of the water.

Grossman warns that the treatment of Palestinian Israelis as second class citizens cannot continue to be ignored in any just settlement of the conflict. As Grossman observes "It is not hard to imagine the results of this discrimination. An explosion by the Palestinians in Israel over ongoing discrimination and humiliation will be complex and dangerous when an independent Palestinian entity exists." To prevent such an internal intifada, Grossman urges that the status of Israel's Palestinians become part of the peace negotiations so that "any agreement with the Arabs should be complete and final, ending absolutely all border and land disputes, all claims and ambiguities between the two peoples."

Such a clear resolution of the convoluted Palestinian-Israeli conflict is unlikely. Yet these two books give hope, that at least the problems — if not the solutions — will begin to emerge in all their human complexity, shorn of the partisanship that up to now has generally tainted works on Israel and the Middle East, especially in the United States.

Donald Neff

Donald Neff is the author of the *Warriors* trilogy, studies of U.S. policy relating to Israel and the Arabs during the wars of 1956, 1967, and 1973. The review is reprinted from the *Guardian Weekly*.

THOUGHTS FOR THIS WEEK

Never trust a man who speaks well of everybody — John Churton Collins, English literary critic (1840-1900).

A man wrapped up in himself makes a very small bundle — Benjamin Franklin, U.S. statesman (1706-1790).

Imagination is more important than knowledge — Albert Einstein, German-born physicist (1879-1955).

Self-conquest is the greatest of victories — Plato, Greek philosopher (about 427-347 B.C.).

We think according to nature. We speak according to rules. We act according to custom — Francis Bacon, English writer (1561-1626).

The worst vice of a fanatic is his sincerity — Oscar Wilde, Irish-born writer (1854-1900).

Somewhere over the rainbow

By Jean-Claude Elias

If you are using a personal computer (PC), chances are that the most important part of what you're doing and the beautiful conclusion of all your efforts is in the printout. Hence the importance of having the right printer.

Gone are the days when you had to buy very expensive printers only to find that their printout quality was less than acceptable and looked like hieroglyphics instead of your native language. For anything between JD 200 and JD 500 you can now purchase an excellent and fast Letter-Quality printer, with characters' sharpness on a par with the best daisy-wheel typewriters. Such machines however, for the most part, offer black-on-white printing only.

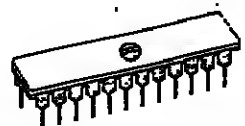
With the extensive use of drawings, business graphics and general charts, the current trend in personal computing, colour work has become a must. Having superb colour graphics on a high resolution screen and then turning them into dull black-and-white hard copy (printed paper) is a very disappointing and frustrating experience. Most users agree that this is a major weakness in PC systems.

Naturally the computer industry has more than one solution. How good and, especially, how feasible are these solutions?

At the bottom of the range, manufacturers propose standard dot-matrix printers fitted with both a black and a four-colour ribbon. Though quite affordable for the private user — their prices are in the same range as above, JD 200 to JD 500 — they are very slow and do not produce quality colours. These are obtained by a combination of the main four colours on the ribbon. The ink density is not evenly distributed and the actual number of possible colours is very limited. Because of this limitation, the computer first checks the drawing's colours on the screen, they can be hundreds or even millions, and then decides which is the closest colour available on the printer. The beautiful and fashionable fuchsia you are admiring on the monitor will end as plain blue on such a printer. This won't satisfy those who do art drawing, but it would still be all right for business charts.

In the middle of range, quality and colour ink-jet printers cost between JD 1,000 and JD 2,000 but offer output which is incomparably superior to the above described machines. The resolution (sharpness) of the ink-jet is close, and sometimes superior, to the laser printer. Hewlett-Packard, a leading name in this technology, manufactures a model named PaintJet able to produce 16 million different colours

chip talk



with the essential feature of allowing the user to exactly match the screen colours with the printer's, thanks to the international Pantone colour numbers. Lexmark, an IBM brand for printers, has just launched another similar model with very professional features, though two times more expensive than the Hewlett-Packard's. Epson, a leading name in printers is coming up with their own solution.

The sophisticated colour ink-jet printers are not very fast when compared to black-and-white models. Moreover, their running cost is prohibitive for most private users. Due to the fact that specially coated paper must be used for good results, and the high price of the ink bottles, the average cost of a printed A4 sheet reaches as much as half a dollar. Beyond financial considerations, using efficiently these printers requires some technical background as they are not intended for those who are beginners in the field of PCs.

At the very top of the range we find a type of colour printers that rely on a combination of different techniques like laser and thermal transfer for instance, and produce the best printout money can buy with vivid, bright and consistent colours, along with very high resolution. The starting price is around JD 5,000 and can go up to JD 20,000 or JD 30,000. The cost of these printers and the fact that it takes experienced computer professionals to run them put them far beyond the limits of personal computing.

In conclusion, choosing a colour printer, whether dot-matrix or ink-jet, is a question of correctly estimating the price of the printer, its running cost and how user-friendly it is. Most of all, if dot-matrix is selected, the user has to be aware that he or she is trading high resolution monochrome printing for low resolution colours. Some will simply prefer a good black-and-white laser printer (able to produce shades of grey) instead of a middle-of-the-road colour one.

Eid Al Fitr

By E. Yaghi

After the long and strenuous month of fasting in Ramadan, Shaker and his family were happy and excited for the advent of Eid Al Fitr. The last few days of the holy month were spent in preparing the house for the occasion. Windows were washed, rugs cleaned, furniture polished, prayer rugs laundered and even ma'moul baked. A sort of spring cleaning combined with holiday sanitation gave Shaker's house a different atmosphere of order and shine. Gone until next Ramadan were the tedious meals consisting of more one, main course and the mountain of dirty dishes that inevitably followed. Gone too, was gripping lethargy that seemed to creep into each family member's physique during the last hours before the setting of the sun.

On the day of the feast, everyone in Shaker's household rose before the Eid prayer, showered and dressed in their new and best clothes to prepare themselves for the first deluge of arrivals that would soon ring the doorbell. And so it happened, at around 6:45 a.m., the first surge congregated together to greet Shaker, his family and especially his elderly mother who lived with him. Everything had to be prepared beforehand for the very early visitors who had no time to wait for coffee and tea to yet be made as there were still many houses to visit and Shaker's was the first on their list.

The stairway filled with the echo of men's voices and the guest room overflowed to capacity with about 36 men who greeted the elderly woman who was either everyone's sister, aunt, mother or grandmother. "Kul senna wa inte salme!" all the men said as they grabbed her hand and either kissed it or shook it fondly.

One of Shaker's sons was ready with a thermos of hot plain Arab coffee while the other passed around holiday candy and ma'moul. It was refreshing to be able to eat during daylight for the first time in 30 days. As the first group still sat, another entered and joined the first. Those sitting stood up to shake the newcomers' hands. More coffee and sweets were passed around and behind the scene, in the kitchen, the mountain of dishes that prevailed always in Ramadan was replaced by a mountain of cups and glasses as tea and coffee were repeatedly made again and again.

At about 7:30 a.m., Shaker, his brother and many cousins departed to make the rounds to all the other houses

of their relatives. Most of the houses they visited were in the same neighbourhood, but some homes were further away so the good wishers had to be transported around in a line of cars. One son remained behind with more tea and serve any new guests who might arrive with more tea and coffee. A steady stream of visitors continued to come that first day of the Eid to pay their respects to Shaker's mother and household. Countless pots of caffeine beverages were prepared and glasses and cups washed and re-washed until way after dark.

During a break of attending to guests, Eman, Shaker's wife, was informed by one of her sons: "Mom, this is the first Eid that you made ma'moul and they weren't as hard as rocks. Remember that recipe so that you can make them in the future as well as you did this time!"

"That's true," she replied, embarrassed. "For the first time in my life I made good ma'moul. They are so soft, almost too soft. At least now I can put them in front of our guests without their teeth falling out when they eat."

At last at 8 o'clock that evening, no more visitors came and Shaker and his exhausted family finished with all the company for the day. However tiring it was, as Shaker said, "it is so good to finally break our fast and thank God, we are all in good health and happy too."

His mother was pleased that she was able to see all her sons, daughters, nieces, nephews and grandchildren. Shaker's boys were relieved that they didn't have to fast any longer, proud of their new clothes and busy counting their money gained from their father, grandmother and their uncle. As for Eman, her hands grew rough and red from all the washing up she did, but as she stated: "It was all worth it, after all Eid Al Fitr comes but once a year and what a nicer time for a holiday than after thirty days of fasting! One of the most beautiful sights is how everyone's children are all dressed up and delighted on this day. It's as if all Jordan is adorned in its holiday best, the face of the Eid, a period of joy and thanksgiving."

It's also the beginning of spring and everything is green. After the long cold winter, Grass has sprouted up everywhere, leaves are sprouting out on trees and the first flowers are starting to bloom. The mountain circles at last are busy again with a multitude of families coming and going and little children who play football, hide and seek or fly kites. To everyone, Happy Eid!

JTV CHANNEL 2 WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, April 1

10:00 News In English
8:30 Chance In A Million
9:10 Quantum Leap
10:00 News In English
10:20 Feature Film

Friday, April 2

8:30 Billy
9:10 E.N.G.
10:00 News In English
10:20 Miniseries — Wagner

Saturday, April 3

8:30 Super Bloopers And New Practical Jokes
Scenes showing the bloopers and mistakes of celebrities and actors.
9:00 Local Programme — Perspective
9:30 Saturday Variety Show

10:00 News In English

10:20 Feature Film — Lady In A Corner

Starring: Brian Keith, Lindsay Frost and Christopher Neame.

Grace, editor in chief of a prestigious fashion magazine, fights to keep it from falling into the hands of an immoral publisher.

Sunday, April 4

8:30 Who's The Boss?
Part 2 of the last episode in which Tony fights against the government plan to reduce the budget for the elderly.

9:10 Documentary — Equinox

The Healing Mind
A scientific report on how the body is affected by mental exhaustion.

10:00 News In English

10:20 French Series — Vol-

Monday, April 5

8:30 The Powers That Be

Gramma gate

The senator, his wife and his daughter fall into a series of traps.

9:10 Marlin Bay

Hemits represents an industrial firm. He wants to invest in a contracting business in Marlin Bay where the casinos and the beautiful shores are.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Jordan Weekly

10:40 Street Justice

Legacy

Sergeant Adam tries to arrest a hit man in order to use him as a witness against a gang.

Tuesday, April 6

8:30 Step By Step

9:10 Forever Green

Jack's family mingles with the new community.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Feature Film — Sunset Boulevard

Starring: William Holden, Gloria Swanson

An old classic about an aging actress who falls madly in love with a young writer and kills him when he tries to desert her.

Wednesday, April 7

8:30 Chance In A Million

Alison is looking for a new flat and Tom asks her to stay in one of the rooms of his.

9:00 Spotlight

9:30 Documentary

10:00 News In English

10:20 Miniseries

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

By Mohammad A. Shuqair

BONERS

- ★ A CALF is a calf until it has a calf and then it's a cow.
- ★ THE BOTTOM of the sea is composed of clay and fine sentiments.
- ★ A SKELETON is a man or person without meat or skin.
- ★ FOR FAINTING: Rub the person's chest, or if a lady, rub her arm above the hand.
- ★ A LYRIC is something written to be sung by a liar.
- ★ AN AMERICAN is a sort of queer Englishman.

★★★★★

LET'S CHAT IN ARABIC

- I need a doctor. *Ayez tabib.*
- Do you know a doctor who speaks English? *Taraf tabib yikallam Ingleezi?*
- Where is his clinic? *Feyn lyad'tu?*
- Where is the hospital? *Feyn el-mustashfa?*
- I don't feel well. *Sihiti moosh tamam.*
- I feel sick. *Ana marred.*
- I feel dizzy. *Ana dawkan.*
- I have a headache. *Indi suda'.*
- I have a toothache. *Indi waja fil-asnan.*
- It hurts me here. *El-waja min hana.*
- My leg hurts me. *Rijli toja'ni.*
- ★ My eye. *Ayni.*
- ★ My tongue. *Lisani.*
- ★ My mouth. *Fami.*
- ★ My ear. *Ozni.*
- ★ My knee. *Rokbati.*
- ★ My chest. *Sadri.*
- ★ My heart. *Qalbi.*
- ★ My shoulder. *Kifti.*
- ★ My throat. *Zori.*
- ★ My hand. *Eadi.*
- ★ My nose. *Monkhari.*

★★★★★

TANTALIZING FACTS

- John Keats and Robert Louis Stevenson wrote their greatest books while weakened by T.B. (Tuberculosis).
- Honey contains all the vitamins which nutritionists consider necessary to health.
- The nine most useful English words are: and, be, it, of, the, will, I, have and you.
- The burning of one cigarette produces approximately two milligrammes of nicotine.
- At least 50 per cent of the African-Americans in the U.S. belong to the Baptist Church.
- Steam is water that is expanded sixteen hundred times its original volume.

★★★★★

JOKES

During a general knowledge period, a teacher asked her class, "What do they do in the houses of parliament?" One of the pupils replied: "They make H.P. sauce!"

★★★★★

One man was trying to sell a horse to another man.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

Friday, April 2

1983 — Britain and France refuse to support construction of Baghdad Railway.
1917 — U.S. President Woodrow Wilson summons special session of Congress to declare war upon Germany.
1947 — U.N. Security Council appoints U.S. as trustee for Pacific islands formerly under Japanese mandate; Britain refers Palestine question to United Nations.
1964 — Yemen charges Britain with air attacks on its territory.
1990 — Iraqi President Saddam Hussein says he would use binary nerve gas weapons — outlawed since 1925 — against Israel if attacked.

Saturday, April 3

1936 — Ras Tafari becomes Emperor Haile Selassie of Abyssinia (Ethiopia).
1941 — British troops evacuate Lihyan port of Benghazi during World War II.
1972 — Japan's Prime Minister Eisaku Sato acknowledges

knowledge to the Diet (parliament) personal responsibility for negotiations over the return of Okinawa from the United States to Japan.

1979 — Pakistan's former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, ousted in coup 21 months earlier, is executed by hanging.

1988 — Iraq says its warplanes raided two Iranian oil refineries, but Iran says the bombs hit residential areas.

1991 — U.N. Security Council votes 12-1 to accept ceasefire resolution requiring Iraq to destroy its weapons of mass destruction and authorising peacekeeping troops to be deployed in the region.

1992 — Boris Yeltsin reshuffles his cabinet in a key parliament session.

Sunday, April 4

1949 — North Atlantic Treaty is signed in Washington by foreign ministers of United States, Britain, France, Belgium, Netherlands, Italy, Portugal, Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Canada for mutual assistance against aggression in North Atlantic.

1964 — Archbishop Makarios abrogates 1960 treaty between Greece, Turkey and Cyprus, and heavy fighting erupts in northwest Cyprus.

1986 — Israel formally asks for access to United Nations War Crimes Commission file on former Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim.

1989 — At least five people are killed when rockets slam into residential neighbourhood of Kabul, Afghanistan.

1990 — Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev warns republic of Estonia to rescind independence declaration.

Monday, April 5

1946 — Soviet Union agrees to withdraw troops from Iran on promise of reforms in Azerbaijan.

1958 — Fidel Castro begins "total war" against Batista government in Cuba.

1971 — Pakistan airlifts foreigners from East Pakistan as fighting rages during a revolt.

1989 — Vietnam announces it will withdraw all its troops from Cambodia by Sept. 30 to encourage political settlement of the 10-year-

old conflict.

1990 — Soviet Foreign Minister Edouard Shevardnadze, in talks with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, edges away from demand that unified Germany be neutral.

1991 — Iraq's ambassador to the U.N. says his government will accept a U.N. fact-finding team to investigate the plight of the Kurds.

Tuesday, April 6

1812 — British forces capture Badajoz in Spain.

1909 — U.S. explorer Robert E. Peary reaches North Pole.

1917 — United States declares war on Germany.

1945 — U.S. Naval Forces score victory over Japanese at Kyushu in World War II.

1968 — Israeli settlers and Arab villagers clash in West Bank village, killing two Palestinians and an Israeli girl.

1991 — Iraq accepts U.N. conditions for ending the Gulf War in a long letter to the United Nations that seems to include several conditions.

By The Associated Press

Boundless creativity sets Mustapha Razzaz apart

By Clare Pedrick
ROME — As a boy, Mustapha Razzaz quickly developed the most sophisticated art of subterfuge so as to be able to do what he enjoyed most — painting. Mustapha showed artistic promise from an early age. He saved every last cent of his pocket money to put towards buying materials for his painting and sculpture. But his father was bitterly opposed to what he regarded as a time-wasting and dangerous hobby.

"He was scared I was not going to make it in high school," recalls Mr. Razzaz. "All the teachers were sending messages saying it would be fatal if I kept on drawing. Any painting he found, he would destroy, and he burnt my brushes and paints when he found them. So I used to sneak out to the garden room with a wire and a light-bulb and spend all night working there. It was like smuggling."

Mr. Razzaz's father did not live long enough to see his son become one of Egypt's best-known painters, with an entire wing of Cairo's Museum of Modern Art devoted to his work, and wall space in major museums from Oslo to Bahrain. But inadvertently, he helped Mr. Razzaz lay the foundations for his success by gaining him access to Cairo's National Library where he was a curator. Mr. Razzaz spent every spare minute there, poring over ancient Islamic and Arabic manuscripts, exploring

the worlds of mysticism, fantasy and alchemy which were to feature so strongly in his work later on.

"I was especially interested by the folkloric manuscripts and miniatures," said Mr. Razzaz in an interview in Rome where he was holding a month-long exhibition until mid-February. "These were done by ancient authors from about 800 years ago. They were full of fantasy and magic symbols. They were like textbooks in those days, to enable people to read the stars, to read fortunes or to interpret events according to the constellations. Entry to see these manuscripts was almost forbidden to anyone else, but I used to go there almost every day. I was fascinated by them."

The fantastic features strongly in Mr. Razzaz's art. The manuscripts which unleashed his own imagination were full of strange animals — part-turtle, part-elephant, weird beasts with wings — and Mr. Razzaz's canvases are clearly coloured by them. In his work, the theme of metamorphosis is a recurrent one. Time and time again, a human face is transfigured into a bird, or a human body becomes that of a horse or a plant.

He also admits to being influenced by the readings of the Sufi monks, an Islamic tradition whose members devote their lives to contemplation. "There was no difference between the kingdoms in the Sufis' way of thinking, no

difference between the social or the sacred classes," said Mr. Razzaz. "A man could be selected to become a bird to contain his arrogance, and could then be a horse to learn courage and daring and nobility, and then he could become a god."

While still in his teens, Mr. Razzaz found himself drawn by folk-art. He wandered around Egypt's ancient sites, temples and museums, looking at pieces normally passed over by historians and artists, since they were made of ordinary clay, not fine or precious materials. "It might have been a simple thing made by a mother for her child, but I found it very compelling," he said. "If you are dealing with a sophisticated art form, it has completed its message and you do not have much chance of understanding it further, or pulling any more threads out of it. It has become an end in itself, a concluded art form — like the pyramids, for example."

Mr. Razzaz's search for the unsophisticated took him to Nubia in southern Egypt, on an unforgettable trip that was to mark him for life and prove a turning point in his career. The young artist, aged 20, toured the area shortly before it was flooded for the great Aswan Dam project. He spent several weeks among the people, taking photographs and studying their culture. "I was the last person to visit before it was flooded," said Mr.

Razzaz. "It was very dramatic. People knew they were going to be evacuated and so they were visiting tombs, taking keys from the doors of their ancestors' homes and cutting the ornamental pieces from the tops of the houses. It was an area very rich in folk art."

The paintings done from this trip are the hues of the Nubian desert — mud browns and sandy beiges, enlivened by a single splash of colour. "People wear very colourful hats and the ladies wear very strong, daring colours," said the Egyptian painter. "It is as if an artist had taken a palette and put a touch of colour here and there to give some energy to the composition."

An exhibition of some 2,000 sketches from his tour helped place Nubia firmly in the public mind. A request by Mr. Razzaz to Egypt's culture minister resulted in President Gamal Abdul Nasser himself interceding to make sure the Nubians, unhappy about the way they were treated after their evacuation, were allowed to build new homes in the style and tradition they were used to.

The show also put Mr. Razzaz on the map. He was hailed as a new star by critics and public alike. "This was my first ever exhibition, and everyone was talking about my art work, my trip, my future for the art movement in Egypt," he said. At the time, Mr. Razzaz was still a student at Cairo's College of Art. Soon after graduating, he staged a second show, this time a collection of mammoth oil paintings, many of them three metres long by more than one metre wide. That too was met with wide acclaim, but it almost cost him his sight. An immensely prolific painter, Mr. Razzaz imposed on himself a gruelling schedule working 18 hours a day to complete the canvases. In those days, he used a balcony of the family apartment to do his painting. But he began to notice that his eyes were weakening.

"The doctor told me if I didn't stop, I would go blind within five years," he said. "The sun was illuminating the white board and reflecting into my eyes." There was no room for a proper studio in the cramped family home, so Mr. Razzaz resorted to desperate measures. He would wait until everyone in the house had gone to bed before settling down to begin

his own working day. "I used to work on the dining table from 11 p.m. until 7 a.m., then I would clean everything up in time for breakfast," he said.

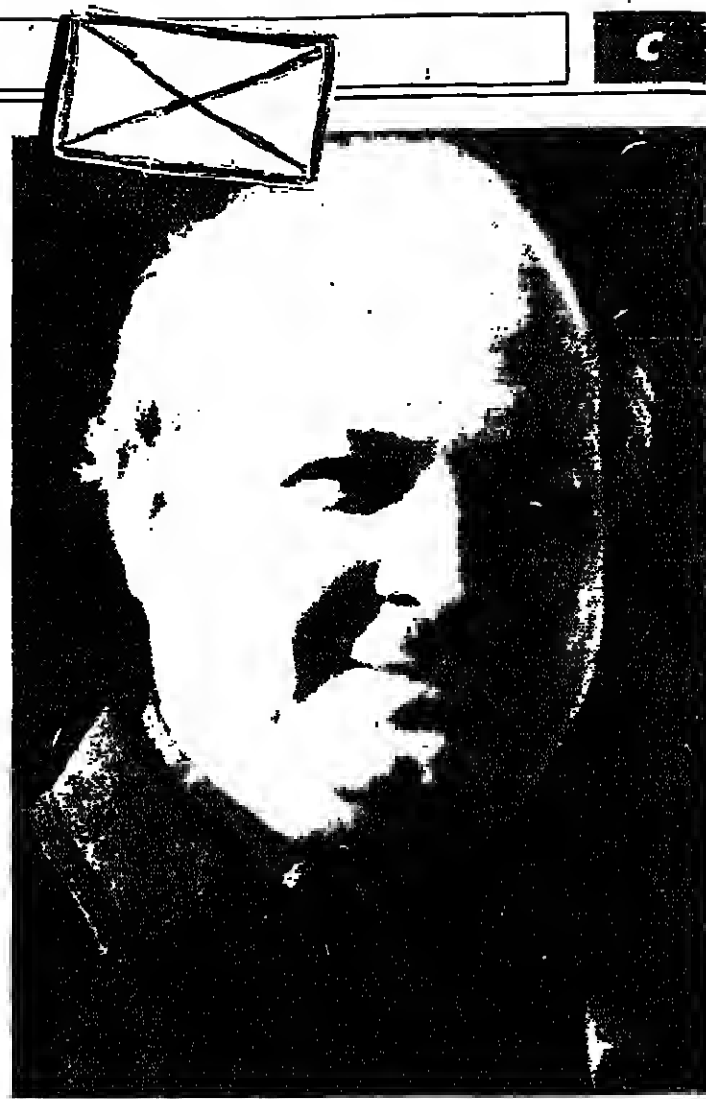
But the table was not big enough to take the larger canvases Mr. Razzaz so enjoyed working on. He moved to the floor. But this caused another problem. "When you do a large painting, you need to look at it from a distance, and that wasn't possible in this apartment," he said. Undaunted, Mr. Razzaz came up with an ingenious solution to his dilemma. "I would wait till about 4 a.m. and take the painting down and put it on the street. Then I'd run back up to the balcony to look at it — hoping no dogs or cars would pass. Afterwards, I'd go back and work on it, and then carry it down once again."

Razzaz is an easy talker and an accomplished storyteller. A favourite tale is the behind-the-scenes saga of one of his most famous works, a giant sculpture on the road that leads to Cairo's airport. Mr. Razzaz was commissioned to design a giant mural, measuring 33 metres by 12 metres and sink the

structure into the side of the mountain. The sculpture was due to be finished in time to be unveiled by newly-installed Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. But a last-minute battle developed when the artist refused to make the president's face the subject of the mural.

In the end, Mr. Razzaz won, but just 12 days remained before Mr. Mubarak was due to officiate at the inaugural ceremony — and work had yet to begin. "In the end, we got it done — a silhouette made of 40 tonnes of steel and 120 tonnes of concrete — in time for the president's visit," said Mr. Razzaz. "I worked with a team of 20 people doing four shifts a day, around the clock. I myself slept for just one hour."

Mr. Razzaz, now 51, still sets himself a punishing pace. As well as being a full-time artist he is rector at the Faculty of Artistic and Musical Education at Cairo University. Married to Sara Sidky — herself a graphics artist — Mr. Razzaz also finds time to supervise his two daughters, Dena, 22, and Hala, 19, who are both studying to follow in their father's footsteps. His



Ancient manuscripts fired Mustapha Razzaz's imagination, adding a touch of mysticism to his paintings

latest commission is to design a tapestry for the Cairo Opera House.

Since his second exhibition, Mr. Razzaz has staged a major show at least once a year, many of them overseas. "I've always felt that if I wasn't exhibiting, I would become lazy and too content," he said. No sooner is one show over than the Egyptian artist settles down in front of a blank canvas and starts all over again, often in a very different style, pushing himself to the limit. "I deliberately put myself in that situation," he said. "It forces me to move on, and that is why there has been such a development in my painting."

Mr. Razzaz's style is indeed immensely varied. "Sometimes I use very earthy colours, like sand and mud, while in some other paintings you find the colours are exploding," said the artist. "Sometimes you find clear-cut photographic elements and other times you find elements are floating on top of the paintings or dissolving."

The metamorphosis theme obsessed him for years, albeit taking many different forms of expression. Then, two years ago it disappeared as suddenly as it had begun. "I felt I was becoming repetitive, and I have a phobia of being prototypical or repeti-

tive," said Mr. Razzaz. He decided the answer was another trip to Nubia, to the higher ground left exposed above Lake Nasser. The exhibition of 80 paintings that were the fruit of this journey were to prove very different from those first Nubian paintings, done 30 years earlier. And they were also very different from the style which Mr. Razzaz's public had come to expect. "People were shocked because there were no horses and no birds," Critics bailed the show as a new birth for the artist.

At about that time, disaster struck: His studio was burnt to the ground, depriving him not just of a place to work but also robbing him of thousands of sketches and meticulously organised archives. "It was a very gloomy experience," he said. "It was like losing your own memory because my library, my sketches, my tools, my old paintings, were all burnt."

Now, Mr. Razzaz has found a new studio and, although it is still bare, the artist's irrepressible optimism has turned a potential tragedy into something approaching a mixed blessing. "I've been reborn — again," he said with a broad smile. "I'm starting from scratch." — World News Link.



The theme of metamorphosis is a recurrent one in Mustapha Razzaz's paintings, with fantastic creatures, part human, part bird



Painter Mustapha Razzaz kept Nubia, which is now buried under a lake for posterity scenes from the Aswan Dam

Maurice Béjart reinvents dance

By Olivier Clément

There is dance before Béjart and dance after Béjart. In a career spanning thirty years, he has completely turned this art topsy-turvy, giving it an almost cosmic dimension. Today, with a new troupe, he continues his adventure.

PARIS — "Dance is a spontaneous manifestation of the being. It is life itself. Is it not a child's first reflex?" Thus speaks Maurice Béjart, the creator of the "ballets du 20ème siècle," and he adds: "This spontaneity, channelled, thought out and rational-

ised, becomes a language, a poem."

In 1963, in Buenos Aires, a young 16-year-old, Jorge Donn, fell in love with that new Béjart style of dancing. He had been impressed by a rical or musical, from Mozart's 9th Symphony to

performance put on by the "ballets du 20ème siècle". He was fascinated by that new choreographic language. It was a far cry from Swan Lake and the conventions of the classical repertoire with its stereotyped characters.

Indeed, in the early 60s, Béjart had dazzlingly invented a completely new art. Dance became more than dance. It became a universal art, a melting pot of all arts, of all ideas and of all inventions, embracing all the great human themes as they are reflected through the great works, be they literary, theatrical, from Romeo and Juliette to the Magic Flute.

And what was just as extraordinary was that this fantastic revolution was to be offered to the general public all over the world. Indeed, Béjart was the first choreographer to create big popular choreographic shows able to draw great crowds.

Jorge Donn was aged 16. He was as good-looking as an angel and as strong as a god. He was extremely keen to dance for that "brilliant creator" as he was later to describe him. He was taken on and became the figurehead, the ideal dancer of the "20th century ballets" whose prodigious adventure was beginning.

But Béjart was not content with making dance a completely new art. He changed its main character. The latter was no longer the outdated "prince charming" of the past. He became the man of today, modern man, even simply man himself taken in the absolute sense: tormented and full of contradictions, but seeking the light.

This spiritual dimension is perfectly expressed by Jorge Donn, the portrayer of "man" according to Béjart, that is to say the image of the divine. As this is the realm of dance, this beauty is expressed through the beauty of the body and its expression. The light of the spirit speaks through the light of the body.

Exceptional brilliance

Moreover, a critic has written: "By his strong presence, Jorge Donn captivates, but

the exceptional brilliance radiating from him comes from something deeper: From a total commitment which makes him imprint spirituality on his slightest movement."

Béjart's faculty for wonder and openness is not only turned upwards. It extends to the whole world and to all cultures which leave him marvelling. "I have a passion for learning about other cultures. When I am in a country I have to blend in. As soon as I arrive, I eat and live like the people in that country. I participate." This is what enabled him to give a universal dimension to his shows, from the great fundamental myths: "I did some Kabuki in Tokyo and a ballet on Mozart in Vienna."

Spiritual Man, Universal Man or Eternal Man? "Fashion and modernity are confused. Fashion goes out of fashion. Modernity does not exist as a function of time. Mozart is modern. Rembrandt is modern exactly like Picasso is modern and will always remain so. If one is really modern, one remains modern for ever."

So what does he think of his work, after thirty years of triumph all over the world? He avoids the question: "One shouldn't look back. One should continue to search." Perhaps he thinks that dance, which is like life taken at its source, cannot become fixed, even in eternity.

At any rate, he has a very



Maurice Béjart, the creator of the "ballets du 20ème siècle"

personal view of time, a mystical view. "Life means beginning again all the time. We live the end of a cycle, but the end of a cycle is only ever the end of an illusion." Could these words have been inspired by some Far-Eastern philosophy?

No, this westerner has chosen his spiritual landmarks closer to home. He has chosen Islam.

Why Islam? "I met a man in Iran, who opened up my horizons. He was the very example of tolerance as he said to me: If you want to work with me I would quite

understand if you did not adopt my religion. He was absolutely open to all external forms of religious practice, on condition that the inside was in harmony with the outside." He adds: "Pure, hardline integrism is a caricature of true Islam. It is as if the Inquisition was the only image of Christianity."

Béjart concludes with surprising praise of the three religions "of the Book", taken as a whole: "The Koran unites the three religions which have not stopped fighting one another. They are like three variations on a theme. The Muslims who are

not fanatics call it the religion of the Book. They are privileged religions." Maurice Béjart, who is an innovator in dance, also offers some surprise when it comes to mysticism.

It is a favourite area for him, as one can see: "I do not think one can teach people to wriggle without knowing why they do it. A spiritual direction is needed," he says, thinking of the new troupe that, at the age of 65, he recently created and which has already presented six new ballets — L'Actualité En France.



Jorge Donn, the portrayer of "Man" according to Béjart

The Hospice Movement in Jordan

By Thomas J. Fitzpatrick

THE HOSPICE Movement, which began in England in the 1960s, has come to Jordan under the name The Humanistic Care Society. This pilot programme which is centred in Amman is hoped to be a model for other such programmes in Jordan and, perhaps, elsewhere in the Arab World. The aim of the project is to provide palliative care, that is, a care which is human and comforting on all levels. This care is intended as support for patients and their families when curative care is no longer possible. The ideal is to provide this care in the home where the patient and family have maximum control and independence. Essentially, though, the Hospice Movement stresses a quality kind of care rather than a specific place for the care. The movement is characterised by an all permeating assumption that with proper support life is worth living — the emphasis being on quality of daily life, not quantity.

The need for such a project has risen very much out of the deficiency of the high-tech medical world in meeting the human needs of people facing desperate medical situations. Often in the busy, busy world of modern medicine with all its specialties, machines and demanding timetables, there is not the opportunity or atmosphere for medical personnel to meet the basic human needs of very sick and dying patients. Further, contemporary medicine is

geared to success — no doctor or nurse wants to feel they have failed. The helpless feeling in treating very sick and dying people easily creates a situation in which medical personnel may wish to avoid these patients. They may distance themselves as a means of coping.

Hospice care is provided by a team of professionals working together for the physical, emotional, social and spiritual good of the patient and family. Medical doctors and nurses would aim at meeting the medical needs of the patients — this often may mean a process of pain management. Counselors and social workers would be involved to help the patients and families deal with the stress arising from the illness. And further, according to the wishes of the patient, religious assistance would be available to help deepen faith convictions or recognise new religious awakenings.

Although these individual professionals would possess a specific expertise the Hospice Movement sees assistance to patients and families in a holistic way. That means that all personnel would aim to be conscious of all the needs of the patients and families. So, a doctor is not just treating a diseased body, but a human being with other levels of pain: Emotional, social, spiritual. To be aware of the total needs of patients and families the professional team has the added challenge of sensitivity and good communication within the team.

In considering the advisability of such a programme in Jordan the Professional Working Committee sought the opinions of many individuals and institutions. It became clear that there are many patients throughout Jordan who are in pain and for whom curative care is no longer feasible. Further, the level of medical expertise and technology available in Jordan is advanced. This advanced medical expertise suffers from that advanced medical expertise suffers everywhere: A tendency to neglect the human needs of patients. As an ancillary arm to contemporary medical practice the Hospice Movement would hope to meet both human and physical needs of patients and their families.

This humanistic movement would provide services to all people — those who can afford to pay and those who cannot. The charge for professional services will be based on the ability of the patient to pay. The ideal is simple: Make services available to all appropriate patients, regardless of their ability to pay.

If this movement is to succeed here in Jordan it must be thoroughly Jordanian and Arab. It seems that there are deep values in Arab life which this programme evokes. One has to do with the very root meaning of 'Hospice', and that is hospitality. Arabs are known for their sense of welcoming. The ideal of the Hospice is to welcome the patients to a kind of care where they can feel at home —

and that means to be as independent and in control as is possible, and where they can receive needed care in a spirit of acceptance and graciousness. A further strength of Arab culture is the closeness of family life. In providing care the Hospice is an extension of the complexities of the contemporary world families cannot always provide. The care they perhaps once could. The Hospice is a help to families coping with the short or prolonged illness of one of its members. As hospitality and family are central strengths of Arab life, so they will be basic foundations for the Hospice Movement in Jordan.

Those who work on the Professional Working Committee organising this Hospice Programme in Amman are: Mrs. Abdul Salam Majali, Mrs. Roger Harrison, Dr. Soussan Majali, Dr. Nart Wardam, Ms. Sophie Karmash, Ms. Ruba Al Taher, Dr. Bashir Atiyat, Dr. Hania Dawani, (Rev.) Dr. Thomas Fitzpatrick.

In late April three Jordanian health care professionals will be sent to St. Christopher's Hospice in England and Montgomery Hospice in Bethesda, Maryland, U.S.A., for training. While the programme is being developed, further information may be obtained by calling Ms. Sophia Karmash at the General Union of Voluntary Societies, 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., weekdays; number 634001 or 630398.

The writer is the director of the Jesuit Centre in Amman.

Third World plants may offer AIDS treatment

By Neil McKenna

LONDON: Recent discoveries that plants from India, Africa and the Pacific islands show potential for the treatment of AIDS are raising hopes for those affected by the disease, but also spurring questions about whether the countries where the plants are found will share in the profits.

Worldwide, 12 million people are already infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, and experts estimate that 40 million will be infected by the year 2000. Unless a treatment is found, most will die of AIDS.

Thus, as the global AIDS pandemic accelerates out of control, scientists around the world are in a race against time to find a cure — or at least an effective treatment — for HIV. Increasingly, scientists are turning their attention to the plant kingdom, which has been the source of many important new medicines.

India's National Institute of Immunology in New Delhi

is currently investigating seven plants which have been used in the ancient Indian ayurvedic system of medicine. All the plants are known for their anti-stress, immune-boosting properties — and are free from side-effects.

In the United States, the National Cancer Institute (NCI) Natural Products Programme is the world's largest project to screen natural substances for anti-HIV properties. Since 1987, the programme has examined more than 41,000 natural products, just a tiny fraction of the world's plant population. Nearly all the plants screened so far have come from tropical and sub-tropical areas, especially rainforests, because of the rich diversity of flora to be found in those regions.

One of the NCI's most dramatic successes was announced earlier this year: A previously unclassified woody vine of the genus *Artocladus* discovered by a British botanist in a remote

corner of the rainforest in Cameroon. An extract from the vine called michellamine B has shown strong anti-HIV activity in the test-tube.

But scientists caution against premature optimism. They say it can take anything from five to 15 years before a promising substance in the laboratory can be transformed into a safe and effective drug for humans.

Scientists are acutely aware of the need to protect and preserve the earth's biological diversity. Less than 1 per cent of tropical plant species have been examined for their pharmacological potential.

Many plant species have already become extinct. Harvard biologist Edward Wilson estimates that nearly 140 species become extinct every day. Some experts believe that in the next 30 years, one-quarter of all plant species could die out — their medical potential lost with them.

This was very nearly the case with a plant from a tiny Western Samoan island in the

Pacific Ocean which has yielded another promising AIDS drug. American ethnobotanist Dr. Paul Cox saved the island's rainforest from destruction by the bulldozers in 1987 when he bought the forest. Subsequently, a plant from the rainforest, *Homolanthus nutans*, used by native healers to treat yellow fever, was found by NCI's screening programme to contain a substance called Prostratin which — in the test-tube at least — seems to protect cells against the HIV virus.

The NCI has signed agreements with the 25 African, South East Asian, and Central and South American countries where it is collecting specimens. These accords give the countries a percentage of royalties on sales of drugs derived from their plants. Wherever possible, NCI also hopes to work with countries to develop drug-yielding plants into cash crops. They hope that arrangements like these will encourage developing na-

tions to safeguard their biological heritage.

But Genetic Resources Action International (GRAIN), a Barcelona-based organisation concerned with preserving the diversity of plant species throughout the developing world, would rather see standard global agreements on this kind of plant prospecting.

"As long as these deals are made on a bilateral basis,"

says Henk Hobbelen of GRAIN, "there will always be a question of fairness."

Some plants undergoing clinical evaluation for their anti-HIV properties have been prized for centuries for their medicinal properties. The Centre for Natural and Traditional Medicines (CNTM) in Washington DC has been advocating the use of plant medicines in the treatment of HIV and AIDS since the 1980s. In 1988,

CNTM hosted the first international conference on traditional medicines and AIDS and has established clinical trials of natural therapies for AIDS patients.

"We know of hundreds of possible traditional medicines and remedies for AIDS — many of them from plants — which are in constant use," says Kaiya Montano of CNTM. She points out that more than 80 per cent of

people throughout the world who are suffering from AIDS turn to traditional remedies and healers because Western medicine and drugs are either unavailable or unaffordable.

Last year CNTM set up an international Healing Roots Network in Mexico, Brazil, Uganda, and Zimbabwe to promote and disseminate information about traditional medicines in the treatment of HIV and AIDS — Panos features.

Malaria vaccine pioneer has his sights on AIDS

By Michael Stott

Reuter

BOGOTA — The leader of a team that developed an effective new anti-malaria vaccine says his work may lead to breakthroughs against other deadly diseases such as tuberculosis and even AIDS.

"The malaria vaccine is the world's first chemically produced vaccine and it opens up an immense gateway for the development of new vaccines and the improvement of existing ones," Dr. Manuel Elkin Patarroyo told Reuters.

He said that "obviously a very good candidate to develop a vaccine using this method is AIDS". He gave no details and did not say when new vaccines might be ready to test.

Dr. Patarroyo and his team at Bogota's San Juan De Dios Hospital reported in the Brit-

ish medical publication the *Lancet* that their vaccine helped prevent the most common and lethal strain of malaria.

The disease is one of the Third World's biggest killers, infecting 300 million people a year and killing more than three million, mostly in Africa.

"We have already vaccinated 41,135 people around the world, mainly in Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, Tanzania," Dr. Patarroyo said, adding that there were plans to start inoculating people in Cambodia, Thailand, Gabon, Senegal, Gambia and the Central African Republic.

Even as Dr. Patarroyo and his team of 65 researchers refined the vaccine, they were already working on the next step — applying similar techniques to find a vaccine against tuberculosis.

"Once one knows which are the important molecules (in a bacterium or virus) and which parts of the molecules are the critical ones, one can synthesise them quickly and mass produce them to use them as vaccines," Dr. Patarroyo said. He clutched a jar filled with a white sponge-like substance which is dissolved in a salt solution to make the malaria vaccine.

The jovial and energetic Dr. Patarroyo is used to confounding critics and surprising scientists in developed countries.

"They were a bit reluctant to accept our data because they said 'oh my goodness. How is it possible that in Latin America, in Colombia of all places, a chap like this is going to make the first chemically synthesised vaccine, the first one against malaria, the first one against a parasite,'" he said. "It was understandable."

Dr. Patarroyo's laboratory is stocked with high-tech equipment, staffed with highly trained scientists and housed in a smart 1920s chateau-style building.

"We hope that in the near future we will be able to achieve 80 per cent overall protective efficiency," he said. "We are now producing a batch for one million people which will allow us to cover the areas of greatest transmission of disease."

An attraction for African governments that most need the vaccine is its low production cost and relative ease of manufacture.

"For adults it costs 25 cents for the three-shot course. For children, half that. You can make it in a good chemistry laboratory," Dr. Patarroyo said.

"We hope that in something like one to three years, depending on the governmental policies, the whole world will be able to have it."

Survey: Early smokers at higher risk

By Michael Gough

The Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Students who begin smoking before the age of 12 are more likely to become regular and heavy smokers, according to a survey involving thousands of adolescents.

Also, the more students are involved in athletics, the less likely they are to be regular smokers, according to the study published recently in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

"It suggests that younger children are more vulnerable to the allure, if you can call it that, of smoking. By the time they grow up and realise the implications of smoking, they're already addicted," said Dr. Luis G. Escobedo, a medical epidemiologist at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta and the study's lead researcher.

Researchers analysed data from a 1990 survey of more than 11,000 students grades nine through 12. The data were scientifically designed to be representative of adolescents in all 50 states,

the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

The survey measures the high risk activities of adolescents, ranging from dietary practices to smoking, knowledge of how HIV is contracted, sexual activity, and drug abuse, Dr. Escobedo said in a telephone interview.

Overall, 72 per cent of the students who responded to the questionnaire had tried at least one cigarette. Researchers found that 32 per cent were either regular or occasional smokers. Occasional smokers are those who smoked on fewer than five of the past 30 days.

Smoking initiation, defined as smoking one full cigarette and continuing to smoke, peaked at the ages of 13 and 14, then the rate of smoking initiation began declining after age 16, Dr. Escobedo said.

The survey found that 42 per cent of those who began to smoke at 12 or younger became heavy smokers, compared with 29 per cent who smoked their first full cigarette at 13 or older.

SOLUTIONS

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. The tiger.
2. A variety of flat-fish.
3. Ireland, The Emerald Isle, is west of Britain.
4. The round which a policeman has to patrol for a specified time.
5. The crank of a wheel, or revolving machine, such as the grinding-stone; a kind of hoisting machine.
6. William Gilbert, Henry Cavendish, Michael Faraday, James Clerk Maxwell, Benjamin Franklin, Galvani, Oersted, Volta, Ampere, Hertz, Lord Kelvin and J.P. Joule are some of the most important.
- 7.

- a) THE LADY OF THE LAMP is Florence Nightingale, who went about the hospital wards during the Crimean War, lamp in hand.
- b) THE LADY OF THE LAKE is a person in the Arthurian stories who, among other exploits, gave Arthur his sword; it is also the title of a poem by Sir Walter Scott.
- c) THE LADY OF SHALLOT is a poem by Lord Tennyson about a lady who died for love of Sir Lancelot.
- d) THE DARK LADY OF THE SONNETS is the person, real or fictitious, who is supposed to have inspired Shakespeare to write some of his sonnets.

★ ★ ★ ★

PUZZLES

1. CANDID.
2. PATHOS.
3. FOIBLE.
4. FRANTIC.
5. IMPLIED.
6. PLANTER.
7. FRUSTRATE.

WEEKEND CROSSWORD

WISDOM QUACKS

By Craig Schultz

- ACROSS
- 1 "I am Camera"
 - 4 Gunshot sound
 - 8 Resort island off Venezuela
 - 13 Adjust
 - 15 Author Paton
 - 19 Orchestra
 - 20 Canonical hours
 - 21 Monetary gain
 - 22 James's Capital
 - 23 Rubber's findings
 - 24 Penitentiary
 - 25 Town near Boston
 - 26 Start of statement
 - 29 Companies
 - 30 Hunter's lure
 - 31 Take to court
 - 32 Feedback system, for short

- DOWN
- 1 Get "I do" something
 - 2 All-star Johnson
 - 3 Structural
 - 4 Mashed
 - 5 Peak
 - 6 Cacy recesses
 - 7 Arises
 - 8 One against
 - 9 Chess pieces
 - 10 Take off a spot
 - 11 Arthur of TV
 - 12 Bat woods
 - 13 All
 - 14 Ordine
 - 15 Pretended
 - 16 Inclined
 - 17 Highly stressed
 - 18 Very dry
 - 20 Scold reprobate
 - 23 Veins

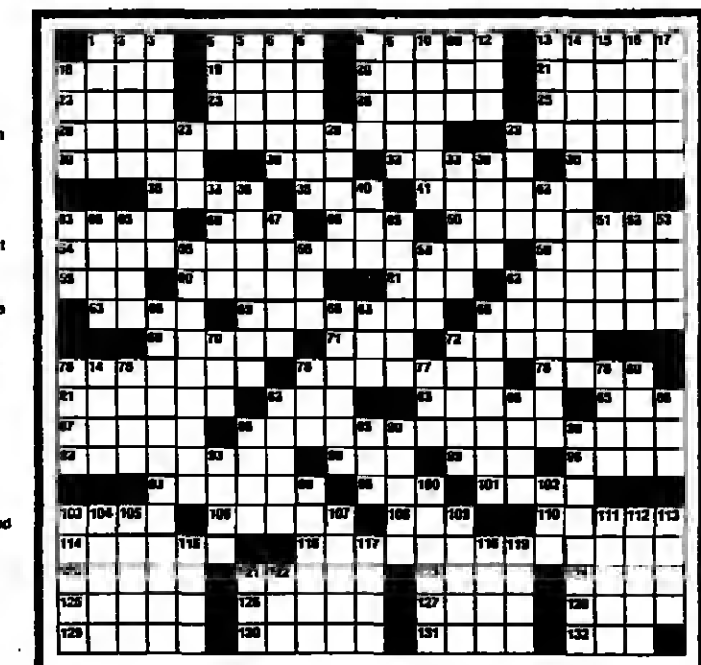
- 35 —free
- 36 Cutter
 - 39 Baby food
 - 41 Can strength
 - 43 —da
 - 48 Bothered
 - 49 Shred
 - 50 Tennis
 - 51 Part of statement
 - 52 Bar
 - 53 Soace
 - 54 Inexpensive
 - 55 Miso
 - 56 Character
 - 57 Fix over
 - 58 Most shipshape
 - 59 Having certain projections

- 59 Anderson
- 60 Go against
 - 61 Spanish linear measure
 - 62 "I — ship a"
 - 63 Furniture worker
 - 64 Good friend
 - 65 Everybody
 - 66 Fall behind
 - 67 Jewish month
 - 68 Decade
 - 69 Young self
 - 70 Fall the lock of
 - 71 Amaze
 - 72 Raced
 - 73 — newspaper
 - 74 Inclined
 - 75 Highly stressed
 - 76 Very dry
 - 77 Scold reprobate
 - 78 Veins

- 69 Issue words
- 71 —law
 - 72 Guiding
 - 73 Viable spirit
 - 74 African leader
 - 75 —matter
 - 76 Shred
 - 77 Tennis
 - 78 Part of statement
 - 79 Bar
 - 80 Soace
 - 81 Inexpensive
 - 82 Miso
 - 83 Character
 - 84 Fix over
 - 85 Most shipshape
 - 86 Having certain projections

- 84 Played hooky
- 85 Word of appreciation
 - 86 Poetic word
 - 87 Turned down
 - 88 Selling
 - 89 Take the time of
 - 90 Hog's meal
 - 91 Madhouse
 - 92 Resound
 - 93 Follow
 - 94 —Cantor
 - 95 Put together
 - 96 Buy at
 - 97 New cowboys
 - 98 "God ha' mercy on us"
 - 99 (Kip)ing
 - 100 Tabby
 - 101 Salesman's item
 - 102 Sine — non
 - 103 Eskimo boat
 - 104 Sail from sky

- 101 Side comb, form
- 102 About the ear
 - 103 Come up
 - 104 Grinning
 - 105 Metric measure
 - 106 "— a Stranger"
 - 107 Legation
 - 108 End of statement
 - 109 Revolving part
 - 110 Holy
 - 111 Undisputed
 - 112 Ornamental case
 - 113 — Nothing At All
 - 114 Singer La Belle
 - 115 Come state dog
 - 116 Gels
 - 117 Birds a falcon
 - 118 Use a forcen
 - 119 Rollup
 - 120 Pipe joint



Last Week's Cryptograms

1. Curmudgeon sits sniveling and shivering in his swivel chair, nursing a large grudge against his small world.
2. Pupils had kept pot of hot coals waiting when tutor showed up for class.
3. Anxious husband maintains his mate's very bad coffee may be good grounds for divorce.
4. Which dish can be worse: Eggshells in egg salad or crab shells in crab salad?

CRYPTOGRAMS

1. NVCL WLNQ JWLY QDAWLQ TEP YDBL
SLNC PT JWEHAW VNBQ SLBVLNA

—By Earl Ireland

2. XCIW VSNV, FZIV BIO AS IR FICGROT LC
FSNBLGHOT LO I JSCW CIP KIW IB I ZLV,
XLVANSNBSK RVLSJ?

—By Gordon Miller

3. BRI DES RETI E ZEKE LUNS BEKE
DEPFUEZL UNB RIP LUTUK PUNL

—By Barbara J. Rugg

4. SHIP DROWNARE AHW MSHENE
UNDROWN HM CNLK TYPT ARXNL ELYCNI
UK XNLLYUS TOLLYRIN

—By Eugene T. Malenka

Diagramless

19 x 19, By Harold B. Counts

- ACROSS
- 1 Fur places
 - 2 Up-to-date
 - 3 Spanish gain
 - 4 Factory
 - 5 Herder
 - 6 Shasta or craye
 - 7 Certainty
 - 8 Sworn
 - 9 —Grouches
 - 10 Cowboy show
 - 11 Highway
 - 12 Heart

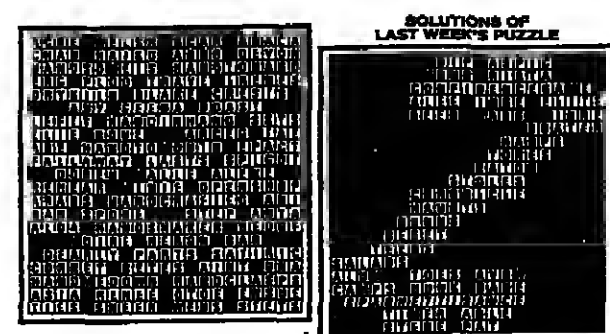
- DOWN
- 1 Weather forecast
 - 2 Jog
 - 3 Hockey great
 - 4 Euse
 - 5 Goes in
 - 6 One of Utah
 - 7 End
 - 8 Playground
 - 9 Social event
 - 10 Soak
 - 11 Kind

- 23 Conferred a name
- 24 Former singer
 - 25 Mr. Dillon
 - 26 Outlaws
 - 27 Arise
 - 28 Arise
 - 29 Arise
 - 30 Doze
 - 31 Controversial issue

- 33 Alley —
- 34 Poler term
 - 35 —"With the wind"
 - 36 Mischievous
 - 37 Insect
 - 38 Passenger
 - 39 Go-between
 - 40 Winter vehicle
 - 41 Me, e.g.

- 48 NCO
- 49 Scotch
 - 50 Sped
 - 51 Strong-armed
 - 52 Port
 - 53 Legume
 - 54 Romeo
 - 55 Rejected, in England
 - 56 Everlasting
 - 57 One being examined

- 42 Only
- 43 Happy
 - 44 Kitchen gadget
 - 45 Bundles of grain
 - 46 Enthusiast
 - 47 Misle
 - 48 Unlabeled
 - 49 Toppie
 - 50 Goddesses of —
 - 51 "Clear de —"
 - 52 Food scrap



EC restates commitment

(Continued from page 1)

and discussed with the EC envoys Jordanian-European relations. He voiced Jordan's keen interest in expanding cooperation with Europe, Petra said.

Jordan appreciates Europe's understanding of its difficulties and the support Europe extended to the Kingdom to help it cope with the problems resulting from the Gulf crisis, the King said. In conclusion, King Hussein warned of the disastrous consequences if the peace process were to fail and if "the current situation in the region was allowed to continue and of the results of violence, frustration and desperation," Petra said.

The EC delegation, whose Middle East mission is officially billed as an effort to find out how the Europeans could contribute towards advancing the peace process, agreed that the peace process offered a "window of opportunity" which may not remain open.

"We are playing an active role in the peace process," Mr. Petersen told reporters shortly before departure. "Our visit here to the Middle East is a sign of our commitment to play an active role."

"There is now a real chance for peace and that opportunity must be realised," he said. "We are here to tell the Arab World and Israel that now is the time to use the opportunity. If not... the situation may deteriorate."

Diplomatic sources said the EC delegation was seeking to apply pressure on all parties involved, including Jordan, the Palestinians, the Syrians, the Lebanese and the Israelis, into breaking the deadlock in the peace talks and resuming the negotiations.

In his comments to reporters, Mr. Petersen paid tribute to Jordan's approach to the peace process and said: "We have no doubt that Jordan remains firmly committed to the peace process... Jordan has been the only country which attended all meetings."

"A big problem in these talks and the resumption of the talks has not been from the Jordanian side," he said, in an apparent reference to the deadlock in the negotiations triggered by Israel's Dec. 17 expulsion of over 400 Palestinians.

It was clear that the EC team did seek to apply pressure on the Palestinian side during its meeting, with Chief Palestinian negotiator Haidar Abdul Shafi, Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Executive Committee member Yasser Arafat and Nabil Shaath, a senior advisor to PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat. "We urge them (the Palestinians) to take part in negotiations," he said. "Both parties to the conflict have reasons not to negotiate, but that is not interesting. What is interesting is that both parties have very good reasons to start talks and that is what we have stressed."

In reply to a pointed question on the spiralling cycle of violence in the occupied territories and Israel's arbitrary measures against the Palestinian people, Mr. Petersen said:

"There should be pressure on all parties in the conflict to come forward with confidence-building measures, we badly need that for the resumption of talks."

Diplomats said the Danish minister deliberately refrained from levelling a criticising finger at Israel, which has sealed off the entire West Bank and Gaza Strip in collective retaliation for attacks on Israelis, lest such criticism overshadow the EC mission, which includes Syria, Lebanon and Israel.

Mr. Petersen, whose country currently occupies the rotating EC presidency, was, however, very specific in ruling out EC involvement in the bilateral Arab-Israeli talks.

"We think the Madrid formula is the right formula for the peace process, he said in answer to a question. He was referring to the arrangements under which the

United States and then Soviet Union — now Russia — act as co-sponsors of the process with direct links to the bilateral phase while European countries and others would participate to the multilateral negotiations on issues such as water, economic cooperation, the environment, refugees and arms control.

"We believe we can be useful... not in the bilateral discussions — that is for the parties directly involved — but in the multilateral," said Mr. Petersen.

"We can play a very constructive role and we intend to play a very constructive role," added the Danish minister, who was flanked by Belgium's Minister of External Trade and European Affairs Robert Urbain, and Mark Elliot, a deputy under-secretary at Britain's Foreign Office, European Commission for external Relations Hans van den Broeke of the Netherlands and Dr. Ahn Jaber.

Mr. Petersen noted that the EC chairs the multilateral working group on economic cooperation and is also involved in other phases of the regional negotiations.

Dr. Abu Jaber described his meeting with the EC delegation as very frank and fruitful.

"We talked as partners in a process..." he said. "A realisation has come about that peace is necessary not just for this region but for the whole world."

"The Europeans understand that it is in their interest that the peace process continues and we reach a solution. We are not seeking negotiations for negotiations sake, but we aim to see that a just and comprehensive and lasting peace based on international legitimacy, on the return of land for peace, on U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338."

In their talks with the EC delegation, the Palestinians called on the community to use its clout to pressure Israel into making the necessary moves for the success of the peace process.

"The United States has stronger relations with Israel, but European countries do have considerable influence," Dr. Abdul Shafi told reporters after the one-hour meeting. "It is high time they used their leverage, such as their economic power."

"Europeans are historically more related to the area and have more experience," than the Americans," he said.

"The Americans are asking everyone to stand aside but my understanding is that the present administration is not against European involvement" in the peace process, said the Gaza physician-turned-peace-negotiator.

"But they will have a lesser role. If they express their willingness to be a co-sponsor, the Americans will oppose them," he said.

The Arab side, particularly the Palestinians, want "greater American and European involvement... but we want more than verbal statements," said Dr. Abdul Shafi.

Palestinian sources described the meeting with EC delegation as disappointing.

"They made a separation between the expellee issue and the peace process," said one source.

"Instead of focusing on Israel's oppressive measures against the Palestinians, they suggested that Palestinian terrorism was responsible for the escalation of tension in the occupied territories."

"In short, they were talking the language of the Americans," added the source.

The EC delegation was expected to include Belgian Foreign Minister Willy Claes and British Foreign Minister Douglas Hogg. EC sources said Mr. Claes, who is also vice-president of his country, has to stay back because of a government crisis. There was no explanation to why Mr. Hogg was not in the delegation.

Questions remain, prospects unclear

(Continued from page 1)

the ultra leftists) won more than 40 seats in the Lower House. Any government that dares to advocate continued participation in the U.S.-led peace talks would not get the House's confidence and automatically fall. The same goes to the largely unpopular IMF programme. And any serious clash would probably touch security and so do with democracy altogether.

But much less sure than the King on what has or will be done on the internal front within these circumstances are his subjects, the government included, the press and the laymen. Much will depend on what happens in the vicinity around Jordan and in the new capital of the world Washington, D.C. A resumption of the peace talks, based on a solution to the deportations issue, for instance, will likely by less support for the opponents of peace. How it is done too will have an impact on public opinion.

Currently, however, Jordan has a problem with the U.S. over an advisory against travel to the Kingdom that the State Department had issued early in March, soon after Jordanian security police uncovered a plot by an extremist Islamist Palestinian group to attack American tourists while Warren Christopher visited here Feb. 19-20.

The problem is expected to be solved in a few days with a review and most probably a cancellation of the advisory promised for March 31. Jordan furthermore will soon send a senior official to the State Department to consult, on par with the rest of Arab participants, on ways to resume the peace talks on April 20. There are other loose ends to tighten with the Americans, Jordanian officials admit. But it is unclear how much of an impact zigzag-

ging relations between the U.S. and Jordan will ultimately have on the electorate here.

While it is true that the next elections will not be won or lost on candidates' economic programmes (since most do not have any) so will they not be heavily determined by the emergence recently of some 15 political parties. These are parties, mostly of the centre, with sometimes strong tribal and family affiliations, which are too new and too small to stand up to the political ideology of Islam or elevate their own agenda to compete with an issue as big and overwhelming as the peace process.

The best and nearest indication of how the King will act will be his decision, which is expected soon, on whether his Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker will head Jordan's government supervising new elections. It was only under his stewardship that the "free and fair" elections of 1989 took place, and people are sceptical about any successor's ability to be the prime minister of all Jordanians and political parties.

The other two strong candidates for premiership, in the event that Sharif Zeid leaves, are First Deputy Prime Minister Thougani Al Hindawi and former Deputy Prime Minister Salem Massa'deh. Mr. Hindawi, who is a stronger candidate, heads the conservative 16-member Constitution Bloc in the Lower House, while Mr. Massa'deh does not have a parliamentary base.

There is opposition hardly mentioned in the media, to either candidate heading a transitional government to supervise the elections. But it is not only the choice of a new government that is in the balance here. A new law for elections and a host of other political considerations have to be dealt with before a final decision is made by the King.

Somalis prepare disarmament plan

(Continued from page 1)

prospect that Hersi, known as General Morgan, might take part in the Transitional National Council (TNC) set up at the U.N.-sponsored talks at the weekend.

"His participation in the TNC is unthinkable," Mr. Abdikarim told Reuters in an interview. "It is as good as inviting back Siad Barre."

Gen. Morgan is the son-in-law of dictator Mohammad Siad Barre who was toppled in January 1991 and fled into exile in Nigeria.

Violence continues

About 70 bandits armed with AK-47 rifles and rocket-propelled grenades ambushed and killed a civilian driver Tuesday, a U.S. military spokesman said.

The spokesman told Reuters that an aid agency had reported the attack. The driver had been on his way to the town of Afgoo, north of Mogadishu, when he was killed.

"A vehicle belonging to an unnamed aid agency was later stolen near Afgoo. No further details were available and it was unclear whether the driver was inside the vehicle."

Pakistani troops shot and wounded two Somalis Tuesday after they refused to stop at a checkpoint in the capital, a U.N. military spokesman said.

Major Ken Roberts told reporters the two men "tried to run the checkpoint." They were taken to a Swedish military hospital for treatment.

House holds last session of its term

(Continued from page 1)

among deputies.

The closed session reportedly discussed the government's policy on the Middle East peace process and the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the delay in the completion of the Amman-Jerash highway and the Shabab Al Nafar Al Islami case.

The two papers said that Deputy Leith Shbeilat, who along with Sheikh Yaqoub Qarash, was convicted of subversion against the state in November last year but was pardoned under a royal amnesty a week later, had an argument with Muslim Brotherhood lawmakers during the secret session.

They quoted sources as saying that Brotherhood deputies launched "a strong attack" against Mr. Shbeilat after he accused the House of not "doing enough" in support of Sheikh Qarash and himself during trial of the case at a military court.

Mr. Shbeilat categorically denied such confrontations between him and any deputy during the session, saying that the lengthy report he read to the House Monday "expose what he went through during Al Nafar case."

In remarks to the House and in letters published in the two dailies Wednesday, Mr. Shbeilat said he did not accuse the House of derelicting its duty as reported by the two papers.

"I regret the attempt to present the issue in a way that sow the seeds of discord between my colleagues and myself (while the remarks aimed) at holding the government accountable," Mr. Shbeilat said.

The Brotherhood bloc at the House also denied that its members had any confrontation with Mr. Shbeilat during the secret session, asserting that the Brotherhood movement had "taken a principled stand in defence of freedoms and individual rights during the crisis that deputies Shbeilat and Qarash went through."

"There are no differences between the Muslim Brotherhood and Mr. Shbeilat. The Brotherhood had no confrontation with Mr. Shbeilat during the session," said Brotherhood spokesman Ibrahim Khreisat (Salt).

"There was complete support for the rights of the deputy Shbeilat," he said.

Balladur announces budget cuts

(Continued from page 1)

Mr. Balladur ordered a 20 per cent cut in his office's entertainment budget and told ministers to reduce spending in their offices by 10 per cent.

He barred ministers from changing their chauffeur-driven limousines and ordered them to use regular commercial airlines whenever possible.

Mr. Balladur asked Simone Veil, the new health, social and urban affairs minister, to come up with urgent job measures and

Addressing another topic that was on the agenda of the House's closed meeting, Minister of Public Works Hayel Srour told deputies that Amman-Irbid Highway will be partially completed in July.

The minister attributed the delay in finishing the project, which he described as the largest of its kind in the history of the Kingdom, to unusually bad weather conditions causing numerous landslides and economic difficulties in the aftermath of the Gulf crisis.

Jerash Deputy Hussein Mjalli questioned the minister's assertion that the highway, on which work started in March 1989, will be accessible to motorists in July on the grounds that the amount of work left was substantial.

Mr. Srour, however, said the projected date for completing the highway is based on scientific assessment of work left and resources available to complete it.

Ending the meeting with a statement asserting its stand on a number of "major issues," the House expressed support for the Palestinian people's struggle against occupation and called for the lifting of sanctions against Iraq and Libya (see story on page 3).

Before declaring the end of the last session of the House, Speaker Abdul La'if Arabiyat highlighted what he called the "unprecedented" achievement of the 11th Parliament and thanked deputies for their efforts.

"I thank you for the efforts that you exerted and the great achievements you attained in implementing the constitutional duties of the House," Mr. Arabiyat told the deputies.

Also thanking deputies for their work, Sharif Zeid said cooperation between the House and the government "led to great achievements."

"Cooperation between the legislative and executive branches led to great achievements represented in many laws endorsed in the last four years, providing Jordanians with the freedom of speech and expression and the chance to participate in building society within the framework of political pluralism and laws of the land," Sharif Zeid said.

A Royal decree announcing the end of the fourth and last ordinary session of Parliament was read at the beginning of the session.

Fighting denies relief to most-needy Sudan town

NAIROBI (AP) — One of the most famine-ravaged areas of southern Sudan has been without relief supplies for several days because of a new outbreak of fighting in the country's 10-year civil war.

Daily food flights to an estimated 20,000 starving people near Kongor have been suspended since one rebel group attacked an opposing group Saturday.

Most of the food recipients fled, and the U.N. World Food Programme (WFP) compound in nearby Panayangor was ransacked and looted of one-third of its food, relief workers said Tuesday.

"It's evident there is a large number of people in need," U.N. spokesman Brenda Barton said from her office in Nairobi.

Ms. Barton said relief workers believe only 1,000 or 2,000 people may remain in the area, the rest having fled fighting that continued over the weekend. It is believed they may have fled to a sometimes swampy area near the White Nile.

"There are water lilies there, and that's what they were surviving on before we started our flights — if you call that surviving," Ms. Barton said.

An estimated 80 people, including 45 civilians, were killed when the Garang faction of the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) Saturday attacked the breakaway Nasir faction, which has been holding the Kongor-Panayangor area. The estimate was given by a group associated with the Nasir faction and could not be independently confirmed.

The lone U.N. workers at the site, a food monitor, said he was stripped of his underwear, taken to his tent where his personal effects were stolen, and then murdered.

Iraq says river dug in 45 days

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq, known as the land of twin rivers, has opened its third new river to a year — a 140 kilometre waterway dug in 45 days, Baghdad newspapers said Wednesday.

The Qadissiyah River, branching off from Euphrates, will water about 125,000 hectares in the Shiite-inhabited south, the newspaper said.

They said, 4,500 workers and 3,100 machines shifted 35-million cubic metres of earth to dig the river.

The Qadissiyah, inaugurated Tuesday, is Iraq's latest addition to its two great rivers, the Euphrates and the Tigris.

In the past year Iraq has dug two other new waterways: The 565-kilometre Saddam River between the Tigris and Euphrates, flowing from Baghdad to near the southern port of Basra, and the 120-kilometre long Mother of Battles river, named after the war

ched around for more than an hour in his stocking feet in an area covered with thorn bushes.

The worker, Jean Francois Darco, said he saw civilians being shot to death, Ms. Barton said.

When a counter-offensive began, he was ordered to flee with his captor. Finally, when Mr. Darco said he couldn't run any farther, his captor shot at him eight times and missed. But Mr. Darco fell to the ground and his captor ran ahead without him, Ms. Barton said.

Mr. Darco has been evacuated to Nairobi, and officials said he was treated for minor injuries to his feet.

"We are gravely concerned that the incident indicates a lack of respect for relief workers," Ms. Barton said. "It has put a relief worker's life at peril."

At U.N. headquarters in New York, Secretary-General Boutros Ghali said he was deeply concerned by reports that Darco was taken prisoner and subjected to severely harsh treatment.

In a written statement, Dr. Ghali said an investigation was under way to determine the facts in the case and he would take appropriate action.

The rebels have been fighting since 1983 against the Muslim-dominated government in Khartoum, trying to win greater autonomy and development for the mostly Christian and animist south.

But there was split among rebels in late 1991, and factional fighting is said to be responsible for most of the bloodshed in recent months. Another faction split off last fall.

Saturday's attack was the most serious incident at a relief operation since the government and all three rebel factions agreed in December not to hamper food deliveries in selected areas.

U.N. human rights investigators and Iraqi opponents of President Saddam Hussein have denounced river projects, saying they are aimed at weakening the 3,000-year-old wetland sanctuary of the marsh Arabs, a traditional refuge for fugitives from authority.

Iraq vigorously denies any link between the projects and unrest in the southern marshes, saying the waterways are to reclaim salty areas and to increase the area of Arable land.

It has continued to dig gigantic waterways in south despite the imposition of a "no-fly" zone by the Western allies to protect dissident Shiites from attacks by Iraqi helicopters gunships and warplanes.

The newspapers said several bridges were built over the new river but did not mention the cost of the project.

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Refugees reported killed in Srebrenica relief convoy panic

TUZLA, Bosnia (R) — Several people were crushed to death in a panic stricken stampede to board U.N. trucks which evacuated about 2,000 refugees from the Muslim town of Srebrenica Wednesday, U.N. military observers said.

Lieutenant Commander Tom Erikson, a U.N. military observer in Tuzla, said colleagues in Srebrenica reported by radio that some people were crushed to death but did not give a precise casualty toll.

The fatalities were not confirmed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which sent the convoy, or the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in Bosnia.

Ismi Nakamitsu, a UNHCR official in Tuzla, told reporters: "All we know is that it was out of control. Thousands of people rushed for the trucks. Apparently they were even fighting with each other which shows their state of desperation."

Another official of the aid agency, Lyndall Sachs, said in Belgrade: "The level of panic is

at an all time high. The local community has lost all confidence in the ability of the United Nations to protect them."

About 2,000 people were reported to have forced their way on to 14 trucks which were heading across Serb-held territory towards the safe Muslim town of Tuzla 100 kilometres away.

Muslim authorities said six people died during a similar evacuation Monday when refugees of all ages were so tightly packed on open trucks that they were forced to travel standing up.

Their journey lasted 18 hours because of delays at Serb check points.

Mr. Nakamitsu said the UNHCR estimated there were between 30,000 and 40,000 Muslims still trapped in Srebrenica by Serb forces who blockaded the east Bosnian mountain settlement when Bosnia's civil war began a year ago.

"Our goal is to reduce the population and reduce the state of panic," she added. "These people are extremely malnourished and not really fit to travel."

"I wish we could control them but we can't. They are in a tremendously exhausted state. It's very sad."

Lieutenant Colonel Tricia Purves, a British U.N. officer, warned that "this is going to happen every time we send trucks in to evacuate people because so many are desperate to get out."

Aid convoys to Srebrenica are allowed to take only light military escorts which lack the resources to embark refugees in an orderly way.

"How many troops would you need?" Col. Purves said. "I don't think a brigade could control people this desperate."

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Vitaly Churkin said Tuesday the Bosnian Serbs face a tough decision on whether to accept an international peace plan for the former Yugoslav Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

"They have to make some very difficult decisions, they have to make some very difficult choices, so it is not going to be easy," Mr. Churkin said after meeting Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic.

Mr. Churkin arrived in Belgrade Tuesday attempting to break the deadlock to international peace talks on Bosnia's 11-month civil war, which developed after the Bosnian Serbs refused to sign maps dividing the republic into 10 provinces.

Bosnian Muslims and Croats have signed the maps and the peace plan drawn up by international mediators Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen.

"There is some work that remains to be done. The final steps are the most difficult ones," Mr. Churkin said after what he said were "extremely worthwhile" talks with Mr. Milosevic.

Mr. Churkin said some new elements emerged in his talks with Mr. Milosevic that were "worthwhile pursuing."

He would see how effective they were only after meeting Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic in his headquarters in Pale, near Sarajevo.

The United States has objected to European Community (EC) efforts to endorse an international peace plan on Bosnia as part of a proposed resolution tightening



Muslim Bosnian refugees from Srebrenica dispute for a piece of bread on a U.N. truck on their way to Tuzla (AP photo)

sanctions against Yugoslavia.

Diplomats said Washington started EC members of the Security Council, Britain, France and Spain, during discussions Tuesday on the draft designed to pressure Yugoslavia to force Bosnian Serbs to sign the peace proposal.

Instead of endorsing the plan drawn up by Mr. Vance and Lord Owen and signed by Bosnia's Croats and Serbs, Washington

sought only to commend the mediators' efforts.

All 15 Council members scheduled to confer behind closed doors Wednesday on the Vance-Owen plan as well as enforcement of a no-fly zone over Bosnia and possibly the sanctions proposals. But no dates were set for any votes.

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali urged the Council to endorse the peace plan before

taking any punitive action against the Serbs.

Some envoys said the United States did not want to commit itself to the plan should fighting break out again and Bosnian Muslims withdrew their signatures.

But others said the Clinton administration, which criticised the plan before changes were made in favour of the Bosnian Muslims, remained divided on its approach towards Bosnia.

COLUMN

Allen-Farrow fight focuses on city worker

NEW YORK (AP) — After a week of testimony by Woody Allen and Mia Farrow, the estranged couple's child custody fight focused on a city worker who investigated whether Allen abused their young adopted daughter. Their attorneys huddled with the judge over a subpoena issued to child welfare agency case worker Paul Williams by Farrow's attorneys. A source said Mr. Williams' testimony would allow introduction of a memo saying there appeared to be reason to press the abuse charges against Allen. Mr. Williams handled the New York investigation of allegations involving the couple's adopted daughter, Dylan. The memo — written by another agency worker — went on to instruct agency employees not to contact prosecutors or family court about the alleged abuse, the source said, speaking on condition of anonymity. The child abuse charges were eventually investigated in Connecticut, where Farrow alleged the abuse occurred; Allen said a report issued there two weeks ago cleared him. Mr. Williams' attorney, Bruce Baron, confirmed there was a memo but wouldn't divulge its contents. Asked if the city was trying to cover up the memo by trying to prevent Mr. Williams from testifying, Mr. Baron said, "that's one of the situations. There are many parties trying to suffocate him." He wouldn't say what happened at a meeting between him and lawyers for the city.

Gift horse for Britain's Major

MOSCOW (R) — Prime Minister John Major of Britain has received a gift horse, becoming the latest world leader to benefit from the "equine diplomacy" practised by the former Soviet Republic of Turkmenistan. President Saparmurat Niyazov promised Mr. Major the two-year-old Akhal Tekke stallion as a gift for his 50th birthday during a visit to Britain. Russia's ITAR-TASS News Agency said Tuesday. The agency said the horse was a descendant of one presented by former Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev to Queen Elizabeth. It was not clear when or how the horse, which is still in the republic bordering Iran and Afghanistan, would travel to Britain. The Akhal Tekke breed dominates the national emblem in Turkmenistan, where horses were once the mainstay of desert nomadic life.

Robot telescope discovers exploding supernova

SYDNEY (R) — The explosive death of a large star, or supernova, has been discovered on the edge of a giant spiral galaxy by a robot telescope in Australia, astronomers said Wednesday. The supernova was discovered Sunday night located in the NGC-2233 Galaxy, about 100 million light years away. It is not visible to the naked eye but is one of the brightest recorded. Astronomer Ralph Martin of the Perth Observatory in Western Australia said the find made with student Andrew Williams of the University of Western Australia was the first since the automated telescope began operating three months ago. "They're fairly rare," Mr. Martin told Reuters from Perth. "Only five stars out of every hundred billion go supernova. There are only four or five supernovas every 100 years in an average size galaxy," he said. The robot observatory is wired to a computer which is programmed to search the sky for unusual objects. The only other robot telescope of this kind is in Berkeley, California.

U.S. government announces study of women's health

BETHESDA, Md. (AP) — The National Institutes of Health (NIH) announced a \$625 million study to learn more about women's health. NIH selected 16 university medical programmes to take part in the 15-year research programme. "Today we are entering a new age in women's health research," said Dr. Bernadine Healy, director of NIH. "In terms of medical research, women have been ignored too long. She said the university medical programmes will seek to "gather vital data that help prevent the major problems that afflict older women." The study will investigate the causes of heart disease, cancer and osteoporosis — diseases that are major causes of death and disability among women.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

S. Africa gets tough with Transkei

JOHANNESBURG (R) — South African soldiers and police virtually sealed off Transkei Tuesday night after Pretoria announced a get-tough campaign against the homeland it accuses of harbouring black guerrillas. All people and vehicles entering the white-ruled republic from the homeland would be searched at road blocks and border patrols would be intensified. The government said the action was to protect South Africans from further "cross-border" attacks by black guerrillas it said were using Transkei as a springboard. "The South African police and defence force will, with immediate effect, man border points on all roads leading to Transkei," the government said in a statement. South African Television showed military convoys packed with heavily armed troops moving towards Transkei.

Tajikistan declares state of emergency

MOSCOW (R) — Tajikistan declared a curfew and state of emergency Wednesday in the south of the Central Asian republic a day after two powerful warlords killed each other, ITAR-TASS News Agency said. The moves were designed to prevent violence as troops buried their warlord leaders in Kurgan-Tyube, an area near the southern border with Afghanistan, it said. The warlords, Sangak Safarov and Faizuli Saidov, were former leaders of the Popular Front which installed Tajikistan's pro-Communist government after a war with Islamic rebels. They killed each other early Tuesday in a shoot-out which may have left up to 15 others dead. Their forces, comprising about 600 men backed by armoured cars and tanks, have so far refrained from retaliation. The Tajik government declared Wednesday a day of national mourning for the funerals. TASS said.

Security Council discusses Macedonia

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The Security Council was unable to decide what to call the country of Macedonia, despite months-long efforts at a compromise. Ambassador Terence O'Brien of New Zealand said one problem was Greece's demand that Macedonia's flag not fly at the United Nations. He said he had originally hoped the Council would conclude its consideration of the matter by the time his term as president ends, Wednesday, but now considers that "not likely." "We are close, but not quite close enough," Mr. O'Brien told reporters. The latest twist came when Greece said Tuesday it was ready to go along with a United Nations compromise plan to accept Macedonia as a member, but only if the republics flag does not fly outside the headquarters of the world body. U.N. spokesman Joe Silts, responding to a question from the AP, said the flag issue would have to be decided by the Council, with possible input from the U.N. legal office. Greece is opposed to the flag because it includes the Star of Vergina. The 16-rayed star was the emblem of the Macedonian dynasty of the 4th century B.C. Greek warrior-king Alexander the Great. The republic adopted the flag last year.

Bonn cracks down on refugee tide

NUREMBERG, Germany (R) — Germany will start cracking down on a rising tide of foreign refugees when new rules take effect Thursday streamlining the process of judging tens of thousands of applications for political asylum. Chancellor Helmut Kohl's government hopes to discourage what it calls economic refugees from Eastern Europe and the Third World by slashing the time it takes to reject most asylum seekers from a year to three months or less. As of April 1, a new computer system with the ironic acronym easy will shut asylum seekers to 46 central camps across the country instead of hundreds of hostels and ad-hoc refugee centres now being used. German officials will judge asylum cases at the camps instead of requiring refugees to journey for a hearing to the Bavarian city of Nuremberg, home of the Federal Agency for the Recognition of Foreign Refugees (BAFL).

Troops end Ivory Coast protest

ABIDJAN (R) — Mutinous troops in Ivory Coast ended their three-night occupation of a presidential palace Wednesday after President Felix Houphouet-Boigny agreed to examine complaints over pay and conditions. "It's all over," an army captain told Reuters outside the palace compound in central Abidjan. "The soldiers who are supposed to be on duty are inside and the rest have gone back to barracks." About 45 members of the elite Republican Guard had occupied the palace since Sunday night, demanding payment of promised bonuses and an improvement in their Spartan living conditions. Mr. Houphouet-Boigny, 67, was guarded at his suburban mansion by paramilitary gardemes. He does not live at the official palace, which is used for routine work and ceremonial occasions.

Ruling party wins Jamaica election

KINGSTON (R) — Jamaican Prime Minister P.J. Patterson won a landslide victory in a general election marked by violence Tuesday and asked his country to join him in a prayer for unity. Although a final tally was not due until later Wednesday, election results showed the People's National Party (PNP) winning at least 45 seats in the 60-member parliament. Some forecasters said Mr. Patterson's PNP could wind up claiming 53 seats. The Jamaica Labour Party was guaranteed five seats but looked likely to pick up more, according to projections on state television. "I ask that before we go to bed tonight we say a prayer for peace, a prayer for unity, a prayer for the healing of the nation," Mr. Patterson said in his acceptance speech. A 30-year-old woman was stabbed to death during the voting, and at least eight people including a police officer suffered serious gunshot or stab wounds in the capital.

Scalfaro seeks caretakers for dying regime

ROME (R) — President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro searched Wednesday for people to form the last government of a regime torn apart by corruption scandals to pilot Italy to early general elections and a new constitution. Prime Minister Giuliano Amato, heading what is to effect a caretaker government, was forced to cancel a cabinet meeting Wednesday after Finance Minister Franco Reviglio resigned over a corruption probe by Milan magistrates.

Wednesday's meeting was meant to put together a 13-trillion lire (\$8 billion) emergency budget to plug the latest hole in public finances and contain Europe's largest deficit.

Six of Mr. Amato's ministers of have quit in as many weeks because of the corruption scandals sweeping Italy. The premier Wednesday took over the Finance Ministry himself rather than appoint a new member to a government whose days are numbered.

Mr. Amato's apparent deadline is an April 18 referendum on changing the voting system. This should clear the way for general elections, but these can only be called once the existing parliament has worked out electoral reform.

Mr. Amato placed his job at Mr. Scalfaro's disposal Tuesday. An aide to Mr. Amato said the president was searching for a new parliamentary majority.

Mr. Amato's last two appearances in parliament have provoked uproar and his razor-thin majority, further eroded by three defections Monday, has to the last few weeks let him down on key items of legislation.

"Amato resigned without resigning," said the left-wing daily L'Unita Wednesday.

"N. Korea willing to accept 'temporary' inspections"

SEOUL (AP) — North Korea is willing to accept "temporary inspections" of its suspected nuclear sites in an effort to help ease mounting nuclear tensions with the West, its ambassador to Vienna said in an interview Wednesday.

Kim Kwang Sup said in an interview with South Korean state television that terms for temporary inspections would be negotiated before it formally withdraws from the nuclear non-proliferation treaty on June 12.

The remarks came on the eve of a special meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on whether the U.N. Security Council should consider imposing sanctions on North Korea because of its controversial nuclear policy.

"In the current three-month transition period, it would be possible for the IAEA to negotiate with us for terms for temporary inspections," KBS quoted Mr. Kim as saying.

KBS said Mr. Kim did not disclose terms for the inspections. The envoy, however, said his country would continue to reject an IAEA demand to make a special inspection of the two sites.

On Feb. 25, the Vienna-based IAEA, a U.N. watchdog, gave a one-month deadline for North Korea to accept a "special inspection" of two suspected nuclear sites north of its capital of Pyon-

gyang. North Korea so far has rebuffed the IAEA demand, arguing that the two sites are non-nuclear military installations not subject to IAEA inspections. The north's refusal reinforced suspicion that it is developing nuclear weapons.

To a surprise move on March 12, the North announced that it was withdrawing from the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, releasing it from inspections. The decision, which would become effective in three months, would make North Korea the first party to withdraw from the 154-member treaty, drawn up in 1968 to check the spread of nuclear weapons technology.

Mr. Kim said his country hopes to coordinate technical cooperation with the IAEA even after its decision to withdraw from the treaty becomes effective on June 12.

The envoy also indicated that his Pyongyang government would pursue a nuclear policy similar to that of India, which is not a party to the treaty, KBS said.

In a separate dispatch from Vienna, KBS said the 35-member IAEA board meeting was certain to refer the North's nuclear issue to the U.N. Security Council.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher said in Washington last week that economic sanctions by the U.N. Security Council could be effective with North

Korea. Testifying at a congressional subcommittee, Mr. Christopher said the punitive U.N. measures would include denying the already isolated Stalinist government in Pyongyang oil, gas, other raw materials, and even food.

China, the North's closest ally, has said it would oppose any sanctions against Pyongyang. It demands that the issue be solved through dialogue.

Meanwhile, a British defence expert said Wednesday, North Korea has the capability to blow itself up but cannot launch a strike against its neighbours.

"We have a clear indication that (Pyongyang) has between four and six laboratory nuclear devices, but they still lack the means of delivery," said Paul Beaver of Jane's Defence Weekly.

"The only thing they could do at the moment is blow themselves up," Mr. Beaver told Reuters in an interview.

He added grimly that a suicidal gesture could not be totally ruled out in view of what he called the paranoia and instability of Stalinist leader Kim Il-Sung's regime.

Mr. Beaver, visiting Tokyo at the invitation of the Foreign Ministry for talks with Japanese military and diplomatic chiefs, said Pyongyang was probably about three years away from acquiring the means of nuclear delivery.

"North Korea cannot yet fit a nuclear device on to a ballistic missile and send it," he said. "But we are convinced that they have a programme that aims to put nuclear warheads on to a missile called Rodong-3, which would have a 1,500 kilometre range."

"That missile could be in service by 1996 or early 1997, about the same time that its nuclear programme is likely to come to fruition," Mr. Beaver said. South Korea and most of Japan, including Tokyo, would be within range.

North Korea had already developed a 600-kilometre range missile, Rodong-1 carrying a 500-kilogramme warhead, he said. U.S. intelligence reports indicated that it had been exported to Iran, Mr. Beaver added.

A Rodong-2 missile with a 1,000 kilometre range was at the stage of acceptance by the North Korean military, he said.

"North Korea has progressed further with its technological demonstrations than anyone thought," he said.

Technologically speaking, nuclear tests were no longer strictly necessary to acquire the bomb, Mr. Beaver said.

"The trigger is the key. If you can prove that the timing works, you don't have to explode the device. That is a big advantage for North Korea."

Angolan government denies Cuito taken

LUAN — Angolan government officials Wednesday denied reports that a rebel claim to have captured the central city of Cuito after a two-month siege.

"Cuito remains under the control of government forces," Defence Ministry spokesman Jose Manuel Jota said.

But there had been fierce clashes on the outskirts of Cuito, a city of 200,000 people, on Sunday and Monday, he said.

The radio station of the rebel movement UNITA said Monday night UNITA forces had captured the last government stronghold in Cuito, the capital of Bie province, and were in full control of the city.

UNITA Radio acknowledged Wednesday there were still clashes in Cuito, but said government forces no longer controlled the city.

Mr. Jota said the army had killed 29 UNITA troops and

seized weaponry including anti-tank missiles during the last two days of fighting.

The government and UNITA also reported continued fighting around the besieged city of Menongue, on the southeastern fringes of the central highlands where UNITA has established its main power base.

UNITA has been shelling Menongue Airport for several weeks to try to prevent government planes from resupplying the city of more than 80,000 people.

Angola relapsed into civil war three months ago following the breakdown of a 1991 peace agreement between UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) and the ruling MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola).

Meanwhile, leaders of seven southern African frontline states met in Zimbabwe Friday to dis-

cuss ways of securing peace in war-ravaged Angola, official sources said Wednesday.

"There are a number of issues on the agenda but the war in Angola is top of the list," a source told Reuters.

"We are agreed as a region that we have an obligation, both as neighbours and as Africans, in helping to find a lasting solution to the current bloodshed in that country (Angola)," he added.

A Zimbabwean government official said the one-day summit of the presidents of Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe was likely to approve a fresh peace mission.

But Harare-based political analysts said it would produce "nothing new beyond the traditional solidarity pact" with the

Luanda government in its war against Joao Savimbi's UNITA guerrillas.